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THE
DUBLIN MAGAZINE

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CHRISTMAS SIGNS : ST. ALBANS, 1941

(Lines written in January, 1942).

By Herbert Palmer

NATURE was lavish this last Christmas-tide
In my cramped corner of the changing world,
Lavish of rare and strange occurrences,
At all times strange, but stranger still in these—
The World at war, and nineteen forty-one.

They came as Revelation, signalling Hope
Across the chill and grey Uncertainties :
Signs of the sky and air, of sun and star,—
Old, and yet new ; in context ever new ;
The hands of God in Heaven signalling Hope
Upon the wings of strange phenomena.

And now because we are heavy in our minds,
And all have need of hope signs and burning signs,
And I more need than most—so my soul cries—
I will set down the things I saw and heard,
And not exaggerate or change or lie,
Though words are hard, and memory's fugitive.

On Christmas Eve a sunset ! Such a one
 As never happened in my life or yours
 In winter season ; rare in summer too.
 Most rare ! Most strange ! But thousands just as I
 Saw it and wondered. Others merely saw
 " A very lovely sky," and turned away.
 But, drawn by some deep Power, I even *heard* :

Banners and fiery trumpet hues of joy
 Surging and billowing on the receding day ;
 Joy heart-blood throated, flamed serenity ;
 A mighty wave of crimson winged to sound,
 Flooding the eyesight, dinning on ear and brain ;
 Sound hidden, and yet clamorous ; crimson and gold,
 Crimson deep-drenched with gold, and then full-bloomed—
 A passion of colour carolling hope and peace,
 The Shepherd's Promise, there on Christmas Eve ;
 That ancient affirmation of the sky
 On holy day, and fanned to fullest power
 Whilst Armageddon, Gog and Magog raged,
 Stifling the fluttering songs of Bethlehem—
 The four broad corners of the Earth in arms.

And when the night came down the air was mild
 And exquisite, most magically dusk'd ;
 No frost, no mist, no harsh discordant fume ;
 Whilst in a proud seclusion hung a star,
 That same bright star we know so well, but then
 Brighter and larger seen, more finely dowered—
 Or so it seemed—a lantern of clear Hope,
 Twinkling and whitely flashing, quivering with power,
 Set in a curve of blue translucent dark.

And diamond-like, as on a Christmas card,
 It hung full-poised above the Norman tower
 Of old St. Albans' sentinel abbey-church—
 That fane conceived in Roman-British times
 In memory of our martyred saint, the first.
 I marvelled as I paced St. Albans' streets.

And noonday, Christmas Day, was as in Spring,
 But softer toned, with ampler mystery,
 Stranger enchantment, for the light was low,
 As it can never be noondays in Spring ;
 Since only in rare hours of the ebbing year,
 The hands of Autumn touching Winter's hands,
 And when their skies are limpid, comes such strangeness—
 Fine, cobweb-spun, and seldom in our lives.

But then, on Christmas Day, the hour occurred,
 So that I walked and watched in fairyland
 And saw earth's light as it were an elfin light,
 Trees, hills, and houses lit with elfin light,
 Yet all in a Christmas sainted holiness ;
 Bare boughs not seeming bare, but green of leaf.

And last : I noticed the caressing breeze,
 Gentle and mild, was blowing from the East,—
 And barrener, Northern-East, wide realms of cold.
 Incredibly strange ! its power was opposite—
 Out of the black and blear and blind white East ;
 Of all sky signs and wonders hardly least

Two Poems by Donagh MacDonagh

FEAR, LIKE A FOG

FEAR, like a fog, slips in at every window
 And damps the air in every room ; I think,
 I'll climb by Luggalaw, there where the air
 Is thin, until I see the country shrink
 To a coloured map, the sea a misty wash.
 There every field is heavy with centuries ;
 And standing on granite I'll know the present fear
 A fleecy mist tangled in distant trees.

MIGRANT

WHAT mettlesome wind will carry me out of Ireland
 Blown like a feathered speck fast into foreign countries
 Where eyes can see a new landscape and ears
 Weary of jingled halfpence of sound may hear
 A richer coinage rung on the graded marble?
 On top of the gale I'd voyage far in a morning
 Making towards the ripe, sunlighted evening and a landscape
 Splashed and dazzled with colour, and people not withered
 With keeping body and soul together through the bitter season.
 But what wind is there that will call to the eager bird
 That watches puzzled the migrants without plot or compass
 Steer headlong for the brightness and the trees spreadeagled
 To catch the sun as it bounds unbroken through the plain of the
 sky?

What wind is there but the thin and bitter East
 Driving the creature into the ragged thatch
 To watch the long rain, firm as the bars of a cage?

Two Poems by Roy McFadden

LINES BY SLIEVE DONARD

THE men who made these walls,
 Rimming the iron mountains with stubborn stone,
 Lost in the white mists or sheathed with sun,
 The leathern hands heavy but beautiful,
 Pausing, did they cast their minds
 Forward to the years grey in the mists,
 Hearing the echo ring like a sword in the mountains,
 Seeing the shadow fall, the startled sheep
 Stuttering in flight, and the cattle lumbering
 In the thundering valley loud with fear?

Pausing, did they see the silent symbol
 Of stone on stone, blocking the downward tremble
 Of the breaking wave, the grim
 Triumphant wall guarding the iron peaks
 From the black uneasy flood heaped in the valleys ?

Pausing, did they pray,
 The heavy hands incongruous in prayer,
 To see an ark on the waters, and a white
 Flame of wings piercing the waste of sky,
 Seeing in Donard another Ararat ?

THE GUEST

I saw Death striding through the land ;
 His mouth was cruel, and his eyes
 Hard like stones thrown up by northern seas ;
 The blood of a million souls drooled from his hand.
 I saw Death ; but none opposed his coming,
 Treating him as landlords tend
 An unfamiliar guest, taking his hand
 With flattering words, beckoning the foaming
 Tankard, and airing the grim four-poster bed
 With quick experienced cunning.—But
 Now he has laid aside his cloak and hat,
 Showing the glaring sockets and the head
 Bone-white, unfleshed, twice horrible and yet
 None dares oppose him, furtively
 Evading the challenge of the stark blind eyes
 And clutching bone-fingers forbidding exit
 And so he drinks his fill, as the forced mirth
 Goes humbly round, hollow like graveyard earth.

Two Poems by Rhoda Coghill

THE CHESTNUT TREE

WHAT crime did she,
 The chestnut tree,
 Commit, that she must bear
 The stigma of disgrace,—must wear
 (When first her gummy buds unfold,
 To show the leaves they can no longer hold)—
 Green convicts' arrows?

All in Nature

Obeys an iron legislature,
 And the proud chestnut, like her neighbour,
 Serves, every year, a year's hard labour :
 But she, alone, of all
 The trees, is branded criminal

Wait till those arrows wider spread,
 And gay umbrellas then, instead,
 Her leaves appear : all leaves her boughs,
 So tender that the grazing cows
 Reach up, and pull them with rough tongue ;
 Their stems, torn from the bark,
 Leave a horseshoe mark.

When Summer's here, among
 Dark leafy feather fans, blow flowers
 Of pink and white, sweet singing-towers
 Which sudden showers
 Batter, shatter and scatter
 With mischievous patter
 Until, where blooms had been,
 The tree again is green ;
 Whereon she sheds,
 Like the round heads
 Of giant's clubs,
 Rich spikéd nubs
 From a branch rough-shaken ;
 And the place, forsaken
 Through Summer's heat,
 Teams with seed, where the feet
 Of seeking children pass
 And press under trampled grass,
 Shell after nut-big shell
 Which burst as it fell,
 Spilling its wanton treasure
 For boys' brown pleasure.

In an Autumn world of tarnished metal, blaze
 Her peacock tails of red, green, yellow—rays
 Of changing fire ; which quite burnt out, she stands
 Nunlike, amazed, and raises stiff gloved hands ;
 And then, when in her rusty frame

No queenly flame,
 No ripened-apple flush of sunset lingers,
 Comes Surgeon Frost to amputate the fingers—

The hag, at last,
 Her beauty passed,
 Is stripped—a map—a skeleton—
 And drinks the winter sun.

SPRING DOGGEREL

WHEN the shy, slender thrush
 Makes arrowy silence as she leaves her tree
 And slips to shelter among further boughs ;
 When long March morning shadows, spread like veils,
 Hinder the grass, and daisies in poor pasture
 Turn all one way : when primroses are scarce
 And the whole wren shouts in her brave, great song ;
 Where each white lamb traffics with his own mother,
 Spring looks between pencilled trees, as a wayward child
 Through her dark, tumbled hair. She wears the dandelion,
 Her bodice hemmed with catkin and with kingcup.
 Then cowslips grace the grass, and lazy cattle
 Move tortoise necks to lick their spotted flanks ;
 Then creaking tit and grating chaffinch flit
 Within the maybush, and a singing school
 Of linnets shakes the blackthorn's rimy lace ;

In duck's-foot sycamore the robin sings,
And balanced blackbirds light on yielding twigs.

The water in the shallow ditch is stitched
With thronging minnows, with their shadows ; while
From that blurred, blinding loudspeaker sky
Comes pouring like sunlight the lark's noisiest music.

Two Poems by Maurice J. Wigham

WE ARE A HOLLOW IN DEATH

WE are a hollow in death, which floats
Over the crest in the next waves trough ;
Over that one green trembling edge
We must meet the roar of exultant death ;
And we shall be air, pressed out and lost
In the indeterminate maze of air.

We shall go travelling down along
The endless depths of spiral air—
Even in life only trembling skin
Makes pockets on cliffs of the dark blue air.

The flies will gather and crawl in our mouths
 And we shall never again come here,
 Never again alive or dead
 Shall we come in the trembling skin of youth
 To pick stones out of the coral surf
 Or touch our feet to the coarse sea grass.

Now is the time when our teeth may meet
 In the fruit we gather from jagged trees
 Before the time when the crab and fly
 Shall scuttle and feed on dirty bones ;
 Before the moment when wave and wave
 Must meet and dissolve into shiftless foam.

On a Painting by Ch'ien Ku called
 "MAGPIE AND APRICOT BLOSSOM"

Do not call me
 From high tattered water,
 From hills high distance
 And stag antlered crags.

Do not call me
 From wide sea laughter,
 From the seagulls screaming
 In the roar of waves.

For these have taught me
 To do their bidding,
 To feel a union
 With the wild of God.

But remind me often
 Of magpies chatter,
 In the friendly blossoms
 Of orchard boughs.

'TWIXT THE GILTINANS AND THE CARMODYS

A DRAMA

By George Fitzmaurice

Characters :

BILLEEN TWOMEY
SHUWAWN (his Aunt)
OLD JANE
MICHAEL CLANCY

Characters :

BRIDIE GILTINAN.
SIMON GILTINAN
MADGE CARMODY
MRS. CARMODY
JAMESIE CARMODY
PRIEST

Scene—Interior of Shuwawn Daly's Kitchen

Enter Michael Clancy.

CLANCY.—'Tis all settled now, Shuwawn Daly; and the Giltinans will be here in five minutes. I'm bringing the Giltinan woman first as old Jane there is after telling me the graceful Giltinans have the better of the rogues of Carmodys in Billeen's fancies, this trip.

OLD JANE.—'Tis all quiet going, Bridie Giltinan with him for a good bit, Michael Clancy. In troth it could be a month since a word came from him about gamey Madge, and in his fifteen years turn-about court with the pair of them, that's the longest single period I ever seen him stick to either Madge or Bridie.

CLANCY.—Nevertheless, knowing what Billeen is, and what sudden obstinate flight might not come into that queer old nut of his, I'm bringing the Carmodys as well. But with Tomaus Brack's terrible threat to slaughter him if he isn't married for himself by five o'clock, I have calculated that even if the devil does pinch him to shy at Bridie in the heel, with the short time left to him to save himself, Madge would collar him for a certainty at the rebound.

SHUWAWN:—Like one greyhound turning the hare, says you, and the other up and nabbing it.

CLANCY.—For all the world about the same thing, begor, and 'tis well you have said it, Shuwawn Daly. Faith, I had some trouble in arranging the carry-out, giving each family hints that great and final things were about to happen; instructing the Giltinans for their life not to let the Carmodys know a haporth but to steal along for themselves by the boreen, a similar instruction to the Carmodys, but warning them strict to come by the high road and wait behind the ditch till I give them the signal, in a manner they'll never see the Giltinans who'll come in and go out by the front door—the Carmodys coming in by the back, or won't be allowed in at all, of course, according to how the day will go with Bridie. And I have His Reverence planted nice and snug for himself in the little barn waiting to be called as soon as he's wanted.

SHUWAWN.—The Lord be thankful to you if you can bring Billeen to do the reasonable; and—Glory be to God! Michael Clancy—it's a show, when one comes to ponder over it, to think of that man doting one week on such a girl and the week after, daft about the other—this going on for fifteen years never able to exempt himself from his variations, never able to make up his mind once for all to stick to either the graceful Bridie Giltinan or the ganey Madge Carmody. Bothered I am from watching him and it equal to me which of them he'd take so long as he'd like one or the other, but God grant, whatever, the threat of death in the wind-up will put a diddler to his capers.

CLANCY.—My confidence he's as good as buckled; still, there's accidents, considering the tortuosity of the likes of him; and 'tis strange to me, Shuwawn, how cool you are sewing away for yourself and your millionaire of a nephew to be slaughtered at five o'clock if it fails him to get spliced. Although it's only a connection of his I am, I'm nearly fit to faint.

SHUWAWN.—Isn't it my shroud I'm making, Michael Clancy, and Old Jane here, the poor warrant, giving me a hand at it. Besides, it's to reflect the two of us did to-day after you leaving us—the same thought coming into both heads, that there might be some special notion prodding you and you telling us Tomaus Brack was to murder Billeen at five o'clock, we knowing about the arrangement that you were to get two thousand

pounds from Billeen as a present the day he was fixed up matrimonial.

CLANCY.—And if I had another notion—its admitting nothing I am, Shuwaun Daly—but if I had another notion what blame would there be on me, for what good would that two thousand pounds be to me and I dead ; then that big debt that's on me and the trouble I have to settle that son of mine on the land. And 'tis yourself was saying Billeen had you bothered, but how happy you would be with your decent living, your nephew in his contentment ; and poor Jane there—wouldn't it be an ease to her, likewise, to get the share that's fixed to come to her on his marriage day.

SHUWAWN.—You are talking, Michael Clancy. My dearest wish surely is to see Billeen settled down permanently and I do be imagining to myself the pleasure it would be to me to have his youngsters babbling about me, for a bit, whatever, before my latter end.

OLD JANE.—As for me, Michael Clancy, what I am to get from him never makes no pains for me. But I'd like to have a good feel of the gold that's in his two big trunks. He knows I do be brooding over it and he has promised me the keys to satisfy myself the minute he is spliced. My one thought surely, my one wish, to be letting the grand gold and the big white money through my fingers, and hearing the jingle of it and the bing ! bing !

CLANCY.—Isn't it easily she's satisfied, Shuwawn Daly. Still perhaps, 'tis old Jane has the right sense, and in a fair or market day, maybe it's a wiser man I'd be jingling away for myself the few shillings I do be having in the trousers pocket instead of pleasure in my heart thinking of buying porter with it, chatting with the cronies, and sick as a dog the day after. But where's the good in complaining, Shuwawn Daly ; temptation is temptation ; and without temptation, sez you, what would be left for the prieshteens to be doing at all, at all.

SHUWAWN (*approvingly*).—God knows, Michael Clancy, 'tis now you're talking special.

CLANCY.—However, 'tisn't that is bothering me, but a fear that a thought might come into Billeen's head after, too, like yourselves—that there might be some other notion in the Tomaus Brack threat, and to the two of you I'd be denying no

longer it's a make—Tomaus, the poor divvle, that hasn't left the bed these three weeks and paralysed in it, itself. Faith, Billeen mightn't be as simple as we think, queer as are his capers about those two girls; making millions in America, he but a common labouring man. Indeed a suspicion sometimes comes to me he could have robbed a share or maybe even murdered a few.

SHUWAWN.—Lord betune us and harm, Michael Clancy, but 'tis yourself knows he'd never have the spunk to do the like. But we told him the tale about Tomaus as you gave it to us—never mentioning your name as you ordered. He swallowed it like a crane would swallow a trout; for ever since he was a garsoon when he got a woful massacreeing from that big fellow, and though Billeen is forty years now, the dread of his life is still in him before Tomaus Brack, and Polyphaymus he always calls him. You can see him below at the bottom of the haggart this minute, shivering and woful.

CLANCY (*giving glance through window, delightedly*)—And he is shivering. (*Jubilantly*). My plan of campaign is starting gamely, thank God! Getting under way in great style; for all the world like an engine leaving the station, puff! puff! the wheels, moving, a screech and off with it. 'Twas the Muses did it, Shuwawn Daly.

SHUWAWN.—Or maybe, the Almighty God, Michael Clancy, and it a good thing.

CLANCY.—The Muses, Shuwawn Daly. Cogitating and pondering I was—'twas yesterday itself and I abroad in our haggard—tormented to the last link with the dint of puzzling was there ere a chance in the world he'd make a right move in the marrying line, no hope of getting a halfpenny out of him till he's married—and a queer turn in him likewise is that obstinate resolve of his. Very well, why, in the middle of my pondering, sir, didn't I stand on a fagot and broke it, and if I did, didn't the rhyme start in the head of me, and sez the rhyme:

“What signify a stick if it does make a crack,
To fix Rich Billeen, what about Tomaus Brack?”

Then the whole notion came—(*noise of latch of back door being risen*), but whist, it's himself—God forbid he should have heard me.

(Enter Billeen, closing door slowly and looking doubtfully at Michael, who is recovering his composure).

BILLEEN.—Didn't I know 'twas the sound of a man's voice I was hearing.

CLANCY.—And the sound of a good man's voice to boot. My blessing on your ears, boy, 'tisin't deaf it has you anyway, whatever is on you and the way you're looking so pale and skeery. A colic maybe, or a touch of that floo?

BILLEEN (*drily*).—It could be such and such, Michael Clancy; though it's no common name like that the American doctors would give it; the smartest doctors in the world; and the best of them in Chicago. I got a funny feeling once from taking an overplus of that frish-frash of baked maize and molasses they do be having for the breakfast and a doctor came and cured me but it was something with "gitis" at the end of it he said I had. If you had only a pain in the big toe its something with "gitis" at the end of it the Chicago doctor would call it. (*Speaking intensely through his teeth and grinning grimly in order to impress*). It's all "gitis" with them, Michael Clancy.

CLANCY (*as if very interested*).—I see. (*Suddenly, in a tone of levity*). Though from what Shuwawn is after telling me, its hardly a "gitis" they'd call what will happen to a certain person before five o'clock if his motions and meanderings don't suit one Tomaus Brack, unless it's a "gitis" they'd say that batch of Cromwell's soldiers got the time the Irish enticed them into a quagmire cut the heads of them like sixty! and the tongues clattering gave the name of Moinveerna to that big bog you have a lovely view of from your hall-door; Moinveerna, Billeen, or if you like it in plain English—the bog of noise.

BILLEEN (*in a shocked way*).—The Bog of Noise! But where is the law and the police. What concern is it of Tomaus's when I get married or if I was courting fifty. What right has he to be going on rampageous?

CLANCY (*with a horse-laugh*).—What right, says he, talking of murdering-going Tomaus! And faith, 'tisin't like Ulysses he'll escape from this Polyphaymus that isn't trusting to one eye, believe you me, but two of them on him as big as egg-cups and they long in his head like a Chinee. 'Tis in the little slope outside the thing is going to occur, I hear, and alluding to the Cromwellians and the bog, maybe its a new name will be given

to Billeen Twomey's pigeon field. Another person told me that all day long since morning—Tomaus is sharpening—I nearly imagine I can hear him edging—it could be with that shlane he's going to do it.

BILLEEN (*emitting a horrified little groan, going towards right, rapidly*).—It's a bad man you are, Michael Clancy, it's a bad man, for its gloating over it you are.

CLANCY.—Faith then, I wisht 'twas myself was in your hobble and the pleasant way you have of getting out of it. She's coming across the yard to us and her father and mother with her. It's Bridie Giltinan I'm alluding to.

BILLEEN (*with a half-silly little smile*).—Coming again is it, and she here yesterday. I never seen her so soft and nice and that new pair of Swede shoes she bought in Tralee fitted her grand. A graceful girl is Bridie.

CLANCY.—Is it sure and certain you are it's her you're fond of then?

BILLEEN.—I am fond of her.

CLANCY.—In the name of God then, don't let the time slip on you. There's but an hour left to you to save yourself but 'twill be plenty if the blessing of God is on you, Billeen Twomey.

(*Enter Giltinan, Mrs. Giltinan and Bridie*)

It's pleased you're looking, Mrs. Giltinan and indeed it's a happy smile is on you, Bridie.

MRS. GILTINAN.—It's after seeing two magpies we are, Michael Clancy, and don't the old people always say that luck does be following the like, and faix the old people had their own sense, Michael Clancy. God save you Shuwawn Daly.

SHUWAWN.—God save you kindly, ma'am. You'll be sitting down now for yourself, Mrs. Giltinan, and you'll all be sitting down.

BILLEEN (*with sudden resolution*).—Maybe Bridie might like to come first and see my young gooseberry bush. On the side of the baan I've planted it and it's flourishing fine. I was telling you before about it, Bridie.

BRIDIE (*sweetly*).—You were, Billeen. (*Modestly, hesitatingly*). But father and mother might like to come with us, Billeen—Mr. Twomey, I mean.

MRS. GILTINAN.—“Mr. Twomey,” says she, as shy as ever, Billeen. Indeed my darling, and why should we be going

with you ; it's a long, long time, and so it is, yourself and Billeen are big friends, and I'm thinking it's big friends ye'll be still, when myself and your father, Simon Giltinan, here are cold in our graves for ourselves.

GILTINAN.—Big friends surely, Mage, they will be ; (*meaningly*) and with the help of God maybe it's a good right they will have to be big friends, and, if I spoke it, frightful friends entirely (*Billeen and Bridie go out by door at left of stage*). That wasn't too badly said, was it, Michael Clancy ?

CLANCY (*going towards window at left, politely*).—What better could it be said, Mr. Giltinan.

MRS. GILTINAN (*in a hushed, eager way*).—Is there much of a space between them, Mr. Clancy ? I mean are they as close together as what we'd like or expect ?

CLANCY (*who has been looking out of window*).—They aren't yet, then, in what I would call an exact and suitable state of proximity. (*Half to himself, impatiently*). The devil to him—why isn't he ? (*More suavely*) They are near the bush now and they are nearer to each other than they were. Ah ! the heads are down now and they are whispering.

GILTINAN.—Thank God it looks very hopeful.

MRS. GILTINAN (*piously*).—Thank God at last it is.

CLANCY.—Here they're back again and faith 'tis quick they're coming. 'Tisn't smiling or blushing she is and there is no happiness in her aspect. (*Definitely*) It has failed him. (*Suddenly to Giltinans*) Well, 'tis better for you to be going for yourselves and I'll argue further with him when you're gone. As I hinted there's a reason why he must marry quick ; if he has shied itself, he's fond of your daughter and I think I'll be able to manage him this trip. But strangers would only make Billeen worse when he takes a tie, so in God's name be going and depend on Michael Clancy.

GILTINAN (*with great earnestness and fine assumption of confidence*).—And 'tis on you, sir, we will depend. (*In a loud half-whisper letting Clancy hear*). No harm, Mage, I suppose, if I may mention that beyond in my baan there is a choice grey heifer waiting to be made a present of to someone and what harm would a couple of fivers be along with her ?

MRS. GILTINAN.—Fifty pounds along with her, Michael Clancy. Well we'll be going ; still, it couldn't be, Michael Clancy,

but he made some shape, he all affection and rising the high hopes in us, and 'twill nearly kill me to be off without an agreement come to. (*Re-enter Billeen and Bridie*). Oh, Bridie, my darling child isn't it pale you're looking. There's a chill in that east wind my graceful girl. And isn't she graceful, Billeen Twomey, modest and graceful always.

GILTINAN.—'Twouldn't describe her, Mage. And though it's of a daughter of my own I'm talking, there isn't a saint under the blue if our Bridie isn't. Gracefulness there is where she is, and virtue there'll be where she'll be.

MRS. GILTINAN.—God forbid, Shuwawn Daly, I should be comparing her with that hussy, Madge Carmody, or indeed that I should mention my dutiful family at all in the same breath with that troop. But 'twas yesterday the shame of the world entirely was at the station at their house, when Father Pat who is nice about his feeding—'t isn't like the P.P who can take what's put before him, he did for his three hard-boiled duck eggs indeed at my own station last week—but Father Pat is different, and not thinking a haporth he just asked my bold Mrs. Carmody to cook him a rasher and egg for his breakfast. "Yerra," says my trollope, screeching out before the public, "cook for you a thing we don't have for ourselves, what a nice thing I'll do," sez she. The people nearly fainted and I was wishing the ground would open and swallow me, Shuwawn Daly.

GILTINAN.—There's people going—and Shuwawn knows it, Mage—that are as you might say, the same as a cow or a horse.

MRS. GILTINAN.—This morning itself the tally-ho was on by them; and I seen myself that son of theirs, Thade, let fly a bully head of cabbage at his poor old durnawny of a grandfather—out of pure divilment of course. In the kitchen you could hear the father and mother going on and jawing and jawing—I don't know about what. Out in the baan the beauty, Madge was milking that blue cow they call "Kytie," but the spansel getting loose and the cow kicking the can of milk in Madge, believe you me if my lady didn't let some nice specimens of English out of her. Sure what am I saying?—isn't it more like tinkers than farmers the Carmodys are, and the grace of God isn't about that house, Shuwawn Daly.

GILTINAN.—The grace of God was never about that house, Mage Giltinan.

MRS. GILTINAN.—'Tisn't right to be talking about them at all, Simon, and we'll let them be. But I can't get it from me what has put that change in you, Bridie, if it isn't a chill, a warrant would think it was downhearted you were, maybe after having a little quarrel with your old friend, though I couldn't believe now it would be anything cross or queer Billeen said to you.

BRIDIE (*brokenly*).—Is it Billeen, mother, say anything cross! and indeed (*meaningly*) it's nothing anyway did he say, mother dear.

BILLEEN (*who has gone to dresser and during foregoing dialogue was giving painful if silent evidence of his uneasiness whilst all the time pinching the top of his boot with a stick*).—But I'm going to write it. I'm going to write what I wanted to say, Mrs. Giltinan. It's after telling Bridie I am. I mean, Mrs. Giltinan, there was some little thing I wanted to say to Bridie at the bush, only someway I couldn't, but the minute I'm in my lonesome I'm going to write to and send it over, Mrs. Giltinan.

BRIDIE (*drearly*).—Yes, mother, he said he was going to write it.

CLANCY (*aside to Giltinan and Mrs. G.*).—Then let him write it. And the quicker you'll go the quicker 'twill be done.

GILTINAN.—In the name of God then, Mage, off with us.

MRS. GILTINAN.—And we are off (*aside to Michael*). A hundred pounds going with that heifer, Michael Clancy. Be putting on your shawl and be coming Bridie, my darling. We'll be on tip-toe for the note from Mr. Twomey, and a nice graceful reply she will give to it, Billeen.

(*Giltinans go out by left door*).

CLANCY (*going quickly to Billeen*).—You scabbafluter, no denying it in me now—it's the way it's Madge with you again.

BILLEEN.—I couldn't deny it in you, Michael. For three days something inside in my mind was urging me back once more in her preference, but I didn't know it rightly till it was coming to the points with me and Bridie.

CLANCY (*going to door at right and beckoning to Carmodys, unperceived*).—Madge is the girl in the heel, then, and you are thoroughly sure of yourself with the moments shortening for your life's salvation?

BILLEEN (*beating top of boot with stick, leering half-idiotically*)

—It's all Madge with me, and I am thoroughly sure of myself ; (*musingly*) She is gay ; (*with some excitement*) Madge is terrible gay ; (*very excitedly and enthusiastically*) She's as gay as the devil itself, Michael Clancy.

CLANCY.—You are the lucky man, then, and she walking in to you. Or maybe it's your prayers you said this morning, and 'tis the will of God is sending the Carmody's to you in the nick of time.

(*Enter Carmody, Mrs. Carmody and Madge by door at right*).

CARMODY (*Jovially*).—Oh it's fine to be young and be married ; it's fine to be courting all day. No harm in being jolly in oneself, Shuwawn Daly.

SHUWAWN.—Far from it, Mr. Carmody.

CARMODY.—And though you mightn't believe it, Shuwawn, but it's God's truth, long as we're coupled at all, 'tis an occasional court myself and the old woman do be having still (*catching Mrs. C.*). And, what about a rowl now, Peg, you funny thing.

MRS. CARMODY (*laughing and dashing away from him*).—Will you behave you shameless old beardy puss, or what will that decent, modest, illigant "by" Billeen Twomey, think of us, at all, at all. But no harm in Jamesie, Billeen, only his capers.

CARMODY (*cheerily to Michael*).—My woman is a fine woman, Michael Clancy. My bluebell I call her, but sometimes I calls her my ox-eyed daisy.

SHUWAWN.—Ye'll be sitting down now, and be settling the forum, Jane.

BILLEEN (*edging towards door at left*) —If Madge wouldn't like to come first and see the new black-currant tree I have planted. Would you be coming, Madge ?

MADGE.—Faix I will and hopping. (*As Billeen appears a little irresolute*). Why wouldn't I, Billeen.

BILLEEN (*slyly*).—Only wondering I was if it isn't the father and mother you'd be wishing escorting us.

MADGE (*in a scream*).—The pa and ma, is it ! That I mightn't sin now, but who would expect it from Billeen Twomey to be starting the like of that for a joke. The da and ma (*laughing loudly*). Well, glory be to God, Billeen !

BILLEEN (*laughing similarly and looking up to her gayly*—

Well glory be to God, Madge. (*They go out rapidly emitting spurts of laughter*).

CARMODY (*triumphantly*).—By this and by that, in the finish 'tis Madge has him nabbed. And, we not even half hoping for it, itself. Why aren't you lepping, Peg?

MRS. CARMODY.—Isn't it lepping out of the skin I am, and what blame would you have on me, Shuwawn Daly.

CARMODY.—Is he ketching her, Michael Clancy? He is, of course, and don't be telling me he isn't.

CLANCY (*looking out of window*).—Faith they're as gay as bees for themselves, talking and trotting making for the bush. It looks as good as settled. Whist! she has made a slip letting on to be falling giving him the chance to put the arm around her. He didn't and she didn't fall no less, but hesht! they're at the bush. They are close to one another, they are desperate close to one another—they're clapped up to one another—oh—they're—

CARMODY (*excitedly*).—Embracing and kissing and canoodling and fondling.

MRS. CARMODY (*ditto*).—Embracing and kissing and canoodling and fondling.

CLANCY (*grimly*).—God knows they *are* not, but back again with them. (*Savagely*), Well, glory to all that's good! She's making a shape at laughing surely, but faith, I can see she's no longer gay. Bad luck to him! or is it the devil himself has made him shy this trip.

CARMODY.—Begob, he musn't shy, we sure of him and she sure of him. He must have decency or maybe there might be a way to force him.

MRS. CARMODY.—If there could be a way!

CLANCY.—Better leave him alone to me for a bit—depend on me to do the necessary.

MRS. CARMODY.—Do as the man says, Jamesie, Michael Clancy is our friend.

CARMODY.—And as he says, I will do, Peg; still, Michael wouldn't be blaming me to make some scrape, and it looking such a certainty and it was a certainty. (*Re-enter Billeen and Madge*). 'Tis my gay girl, Madge, again, is it? Though indeed it was a deal gayer I was expecting you to be returning, and as gleeful as you went out my charmer.

MADGE (*drily*).—Sure it's gay enough I am; (*with some*

asperity) and likewise is Billeen. But it's under the poplars he'll be twice as gay, he says. For it's going to ride the horse over to our house he is, and its under the poplar he's going to say something important to 'me, for it's more romantic under the poplar, he says.

BILLEEN (*desperately*).—You see it's something romantic I was thinking of saying to Madge, Mr. Carmody, and it's under the poplar I would like to say it. In two minutes I'll be on the horse and over, and it won't take me two minutes itself.

CARMODY (*somewhat menacingly*).—And under the poplar she will be fine; but, though it's her father says it—it's fine she'd be and fine enough for that man that ever lived if it's under a common gosedaun he found her itself, Billeen Twomey. Who in the parish can sew and knit and bake the best?—Madge Carmody. Who the topper at milking a cow or feeding a calf or a pig?—Madge Carmody. Who the cleverest, stylishest farmer's daughter walking down to Mass?—Madge Carmody. Who makes the butter sells best in the market and who has the hens lays all the eggs?—Madge Carmody. Maybe she hasn't spunk. But all the world knows of the day the police and bailiffs were ready to make that dart to sweep Dan Curtin's farm, and going to the stable what did they find?—the horses were there but the harness was gone. I won't say who did it—maybe 'twas a man did it—it could be still if I was asked plain and straight maybe I would answer or maybe I would answer—Madge Carmody.

MRS. CARMODY (*clinching the matter*).—And it was Madge Carmody.

CARMODY.—How now about dowdy eyes-in-the-mire, Bridie Giltinan. How now about all the Giltinans, sneaking hypocrites, father, mother, daughter and every mother's soul of them inside in that shanty of theirs. Their letting on to be devout and their capers about being extra select in themselves—'twould sicken a pig. 'Tisn't alluding to you I am, Billeen, but that same Bridie would marry an oldish man for his cash and make a cuckold of him, like Maureen So Fine and her poor old aughashore of a husband with his "gwan agin" to the ass driving her into town and she sitting up in the seat of the car sticking out the tongue at him behind his back and making fun for the passers.

MRS. CARMODY.—God knows then, she used so, Jamesie. She used, Billeen.

CARMODY.—Billeen himself knows about it and how Maureen used be clinking glasses in Tivy's public house making a pure fool of the pure old hubby and she giving him the toast—"here's to you, my dear," was how she had it—"and not to you my dear, for if he was here that should be here 't isn't to you I'd drink, my dear," the gom thinking she was acting, till she went off with a tinker leaving him a pauper. The same sly go was on Maureen before she married that's now on sleekly slimy Bridie Giltinan.

MRS. CARMODY.—The dead spit of one another ; Jamesie is telling the truth, Billeen.

CARMODY.—But it's after marrying that the divvil does be always pinching them sly-gowers—the wrong time—whereas with likes of fine open, jolly Madge and their innocent frolics—once they're spliced they are spliced and aus go brag with capers.

BILLEEN (*in an agonised way*).—I'll be on the horse in one minute, Mr. Carmody ; if I'll get the minute.

CLANCY (*to Carmody*).—Telling you again I am, depend on me.

MRS. CARMODY.—Be said by Mr. Clancy. (*To Michael*), And no harm meant if I was saying to you that another hundred pounds or so would be as good in your pocket as in that of the next, along with what will be coming to you from the millionaire.

CARMODY.—Two hundred—three hundred—four hundred, 'tis generous people we are whatever the Giltinans might be, and I'll go farther and say Michael Clancy, what's ours is yours. We will depend on you. Come, Madge my gago : (*with forced cheeriness*), and I'll bet a shilling Billeen will be first at the poplar.

(*Carmodys go out*).

BILLEEN.—Don't be blaming me too much, Michael. I was surely fixed and we at the bush, but for Madge's own fault to let fall the remark about the Missioners coming next week. Then the picture of Bridie rose up before me, and, glory be to God ! as plain as I could see her in the middle of the chapel, all devotion, her two eyes in one gaze on the prayching Missioner on the altar. It put the kybosh complete on what I was going to say to Madge ; though I like Madge, but in the wind-up I don't know what way I am.

CLANCY (*grimly*).—'Twill be equal to you in a quarter of an hour's time which is which ; though Bridie will still be Bridie and Madge will still be Madge.

BILLEEN (*wofully*).—Let me think and let me try ; let me think, Michael Clancy.

CLANCY.—What time is there for thinking and trying, fooleen ? (*Vigorously*) Out with it and let it be said : is it that writin' pin I'll get for you or will you mount that horse ?

BILLEEN.—The horse. Oh, give me the pin ! No, it's the horse I want. No—it's the pin I want—or is it ?

CLANCY (*losing all patience*).—The horse or the pin ; the pin or the horse ; the horse or the pin, the pin or the horse.

BILLEEN (*blankly*).—The horse or the pin, the pin or the horse. My God, if I can decide, death facing me and all ! Pray for me, Shuwawn, pray for me, Old Jane ! The horse or the pin—the pin—

(*Re-enter rushing, Carmodys and Giltinans*).

GILTINANS AND CARMODYS (*all shouting*).—They thought we wouldn't meet, but we did meet. And fifteen years he's at it, a labouring man that was, to be making a joke and a jeer of decent farmers' daughters. All together at him ; there's six of us in it, but there'll be a bit of him for each of the six.

CLANCY.—Will you let me say one word itself.

BILLEEN (*stricken with fright*).—Be merciful and be listening to Michael ; he'll explain, I'm telling you, he will.

GILTINANS AND CARMODYS.—And you'll explain—but maybe 'tis in Heaven you'll make the explanation. But give a talking to him, girls, first.

BRIDIE.—Indeed, Billeen, how can you ever get over or explain the humbug you have made of me or the wrong you have done me in the heel. But sure, I needn't be upbraiding you singly, haven't you been doing the same to her as to a poor innocent creature like me.

MADGE (*who had come opposite Bridie*).—Listen to that—alluding to me insulting as "her" and I as innocent as herself ? And it's soft you're speaking to him, and a minute ago we all fixed how to give it to him. 'Tis a traitor you have turned in a hop thinking to capture him by a mean shift and you still having hopes of Billeen.

MRS. GILTINAN (*sweetly, to Mrs. Carmody*).—Indeed, there was no harm now in what Bridie said and she meaning nothing by it, Mrs. Carmody.

MRS. CARMODY.—What pratin' so, had she of her innocence? 'Tis curious and so it is, Mrs. Giltinan.

MRS. GILTINAN (*sweetly as before*).—Now don't the world know, Mrs. Carmody, that there is a certain little difference between Bridie and Madge, but this isn't the time to be arguing about it, and we won't be arguing about it.

CARMODY (*loudly*).—What difference is the woman talking about? Champion to you, Madge, and I'd like to see who's going to act the tony forninst you.

MADGE.—So would I, father dear. And, Miss Bridie Giltinan, don't dare allude to me again as "her," I'm warning you.

BRIDIE.—A threatening look in her bad eye, mother, the wickedness breaking out in her. Didn't Father Debbling say honest people had the right to defend themselves against those that would do them harm, and though I'm innocent, it's no fool I am, Madgie, and you won't gain points by having the first go whatever, this trip (*makes a dart and catches Madge by hair*).

MRS. GILTINAN.—The Grace of God be our shield, darling, and I'm not going to be massacred first no less if I can help it (*grabs hold of Mrs. C.*).

CARMODY (*making for Giltinan*).—Another treacherous hypocrite thinking to be first here; but faith you won't all be first (*catches hold of Giltinan*).

GILTINAN.—A blackguard Carmody wishing to down me—but you haven't me downed yet. Don't be giving the leg you hound of a devil itself.

CARMODY.—You sneaking crawler, 'tis you is giving the leg. Leave off your kicking or I'll stamp you into dust, I'm telling you.

MADGE (*who has been struggling fiercely with Bridie*).—I'll pick the eyes out of your head and I'll bite.

BRIDIE.—You will if you get a vacancy; but I have you by the hair and I won't leave a nose or an ear on you.

MRS. CARMODY (*who has been making vigorous efforts to free herself from Mrs. G's. grasp, suddenly, screaming*).—She has me by the throat, the murderess! Jamsie, Jamsie, she's choking me!

CLANCY (*suddenly*).—It's some say I must have, and I order it—out with the whole lot of you that has been a torment to this place for fifteen years, but a fitter thing it would have been to have looked out for common husbands for your common daughters than chasing a millionaire ; and, if I wanted it fixed up with one or either in the finish, 'twas through compassion for this poor bothered woman, Shuwawn Daly. As a near connection of same, it's my right to ask the man of the house, the man of the house himself being in a state of *non compus mentis* and again I'm telling you to clear out of it if you don't want the temper to rise and you know what it is when it does rise—the temper of Michael Clancy. (*Short pause*). You aren't going ? Very well, why ? The temper has risen, and now it's your blood I want, and it's your blood I will have, and it's your blood I must have (*goes to wall, takes four-prong pike and faces Gilts. and Cars.*)

BILLEEN (*in a panic, rushing out back-door*).—Oh ! Glory ! But don't kill em all, Michael Clancy, don't kill em all ! (*As Billeen goes out back-door, Clancy at pike-point forces Giltinans and Carmodys out by front. He closes door, turns around*)

CLANCY (*shouting to Billeen*).—Come in again ! (*Billeen re-enters cautiously*). Only six minutes left to you to live. That was why I was in such a hurry out with the Giltinans and the Carmodys, letting on to be vexed, but a new thought having come to me and I seeing you were done forever with both gangs, and either of those girls being unsuitable for you anyway. The Muses again, Shuwawn Daly, in a manner it must be a real poet I'm becoming in the heel of my days, and a real poet could stick his fingers in a cow-dung and verify his immortality in a cow-horn for you 't isn't like the sham poets settling themselves at a table, fixing the papers in front of them as nice as nicety, knocking a drop of ink off the pen on the floor, gauging and shaping, like a sergeant peeler making out a report gloating over his calligraphy, or a National Taycher concocting a figario for the Inspector. I admit the inspiration came to me through those lines of sham-poet O'Rourke and he telling us :

“ Happy we should be sez he we're not roasting in Hell,
Or that dogs can't talk, or that people can't smell.”

The lines were running in my head and the Muses began working

me through one word, "people." So the rhyme came to me and sez the rhyme :

"The people can be laughing and the rain can go to Spain,
But the woman for Billeen is our darling old Jane."

BILLEEN (*taken aback, coming towards front of stage, cautiously*).—Old Jane is it ?

CLANCY.—Old Jane it is. Not alone will she be the means of saving your life, but who has the best right to you than the dacent girl that's slaving for your Aunt all her days and for you to boot since you came back from Chicago. Long ago I would have thought of it and she matching you down to the ground but for the way you were meandering between the pair of lassies. Besides, "Old Jane" is only a nickname and she wanting three years to the age is on you, Billeen.

BILLEEN (*decidedly*).—God knows, she is not, but is three years older than me, Michael Clancy.

CLANCY.—Her sister, Martha, you're thinking of that was six years your elder and is dead for twenty. Shuwawn can back me up and she knowing the age of both of them.

SHUWAWN (*judiciously*).—I'd rather leave it to yourself, Michael Clancy. It's queer entirely the memory is by me, and 'tis Thomas Clobber itself made out my own age for me and I looking for the pinsion. Billeen will take your word for it, and in all the matter why wouldn't he be said by you.

CLANCY.—He will, and let us consider the match made. A whistle will bring Father Dansell.

BILLEEN.—Oh bierna ! to be married by a suspended priest to boot.

CLANCY.—Whist ! isn't he taken back again, and if he isn't itself, they will have as much virtue the words he will say over you as if they were pronounced by His Eminence himself (*Priest enter quietly by front door*). Oh, it's yourself that's in it, Father.

PRIEST.—Isn't it long waiting I was, and 'tis dozing I was when I was hearing noises, noises, and wondering I was, and shivering with the cold I was from waiting itself.

CLANCY.—The fault the gamey bridegroom's your reverence. But you have come in on the tip and now it's ready and impatient he is.

BILLEEN (*shaking head*).—It's suspecting something I am.

CLANCY (*coming to Billeen, aside to latter*).—Suspecting the decent priest, is it, and the crature after putting himself in danger of catching the flu waiting to do you a good turn and he knowing about Tomaus. Here, be settling yourself in a position before his reverence.

BILLEEN (*going near window, with sudden resolution, sharply*).—I will not, Michael Clancy ; I will not again, I'm saying.

CLANCY (*pointing at window, in hollow tones*).—Will you have time, anyway, and Tomaus moving southwards. The big black head of him is above the brow of that little hill, now.

BILLEEN.—A reek of turf a head ? Finuicane's reek and I know it.

CLANCY (*evenly*).—The hearse plumes shaking—the hearse-plumes Tomaus dons when the blood-lust is maddening him. Deluded and blinded you are for faith 'tish't the like of them would be shaking on a reek of turf, my poor man.

BILLEEN (*overwhelmed with terror*).—Plumes and not rushes ! The murderer, 'tis him ! I don't want to be slaughtered and I'm ready, Michael Clancy (*goes before Priest*).

PRIEST.—The man is here but the woman is making no shift. (*Sharply*). How is that, Mr. Clancy ? Isn't it agreeable, she is ?

CLANCY (*going quietly to Old Jane*).—My doing, your reverence. It's waxing a coord to splice a bail-rod I was, with my awkwardness didn't I leave the ball of wax on the seat. (*Pulling Jane up*). It's loosened she is your reverence (*shoving her forcibly on to beside Billeen*). She'd nearly have run into your reverence but I stopping her, it's a wild wan entirely she is, your reverence.

PRIEST (*to Billeen*).—Will you have this woman to be your lawful wedded wife ?

BILLEEN.—I won't. (*Correcting himself quickly*), I will, I mean.

PRIEST (*to Jane*).—Will you have this man to be your lawful wedded husband ?

OLD JANE (*stolidly*).—I ought, I suppose, and I should.

PRIEST (*stormily*).—Woman ! it's assisting at the Sacrament of Marriage you are, and 'tish't the way you can surely be as ignorant that you don't know how to answer a silly thing.

OLD JANE.—Faith, what could I know about it, your

reverence, that never expected to go through the like, a single woman since the day I was borned and never thinking of nothing at all, at all.

PRIEST.—Again I'm asking you, will you have this man to be your lawfully wedded husband?

CLANCY (*intensely, in Old Jane's ear*).—Is it wishing you are to have me dead right on the spot? Say "I will," you divil!

OLD JANE.—Very well, sure. (*To priest*), I will, then.

(*Priest concludes ceremony*).

BILLEEN (*to Michael, pulling note from pocket*).—There's but a ten pound note in the pocket, and it's ashamed I am to offer as little to His Reverence.

CLANCY (*taking note and handing it to priest*).—'Tis little surely, but wait will you start making up your accounts, and your reverence needn't be surprised if an envelope comes to you to-morrow with a cheque for fifty thousand in it and Billeen a millionaire.

PRIEST (*taking notes*).—Indeed, it's a long time since I had the feel of a ten-pound note in my fist; and 'tish't wild wishes I'll let into my mind because of your funny talk of fifty thousand, or get into a state like some that buys tickets for huge sweepstake, their brains heating with the puzzle of what they would do with the big money when they'd win it, troubled over it, making themselves unhappy about it, and their chance of coming by it about the same as that of their being able to reach the North Star. Futility! Futility! No, I won't be dreaming about the fifty thousand, Mr. Clancy, but this ten-pound note is in my fist and being in my fist it is a fact. I can buy a new pair of boots with it and I can buy—(*with a curious little smile*)—Well, God bless you all (*goes out*).

BILLEEN.—'Tis queer the way they do be expressing themselves for suspended priests. Indeed 'twas the queer marrying altogether, no right ring, no nothing, but he taking a tin ring and putting it on Jane—a bit touched surely—but God help me—'tish't impudent a warrant could be to a priest. What will the big Twomey's think of me, my big relations of farmers, and I having it planned to have the grand marriage entirely, to take the shine out of them I that was once a poor boy. 'Tis miserable it is.

CLANCY (*coming from front door*).—Whist ! it's now in your safety you are and the priest after meeting with Thomaus Brack. What hindrance will there be to a rich man like you having another marriage in the chapel to-morrow for yourself with carriages and soppers and all.

OLD JANE (*going to Billeen, vacantly*).—Rings and marriage, rings and marriages ! But (*intensely*) your promise to me—and the Keys, Billeen, the Keys ! (*Billeen takes bunch of keys from pocket and hands them to her . she goes rapidly towards room, vainly endeavouring to conceal the signs of her avidity from Michael, who, she knows, is intently watching her. She goes into room leaving door partly ajar. A rattle of locks being opened is heard and a loud clink of coins. Shortly, the noise of the coins becomes more regular*).

CLANCY (*bending himself forward*).—She's counting, Shuwawn Daly.

SHUWAWN (*extending her head in direction of open door*). — She is counting.

CLANCY.—I can see through the slit between the jamb and the door. Standing she is, and faith 'tis strange, but 'tis sour enough the puss is on her.

BILLEEN (*as if a sudden revelation had come to him*).—The dots and the nought-noughts !

CLANCY (*turning to Billeen*).—Eh ?

(*Old Jane comes down from room and goes to Billeen*).

OLD JANE.—Here's your money, and here's your keys, Billeen. And 'tis all the money and all the millions—and all the millions is but three hundred and twenty pounds, Michael Clancy. There's a hundred and twenty on deposit receipt, and eight in bank notes ; and the millions in gold is but a few sovereigns and half sovereigns, half-crowns and florins, sixpenny bits and threepenny bits and fourpenny bits, a couple of bob and some coppers, making up the balance—a matter of twenty pounds, Michael Clancy. (*Goes to seat, sits down. Looks entirely unhappy*).

CLANCY (*in a tone of hollow anger and forced scepticism*).—Apish you're talking, woman, in the last stage of your ignorance.

OLD JANE.—Maybe ; but if it's no hand I was able to make of the parsing and geography itself the time I was going to school, it's noted I was for Algebra and the Arithmetic in a manner Mrs. Mahanny, the taycher, used say I'd do great inside the

counter ; and Jug Doolan and Ned Oge and my sister Martha — God rest their souls ! they're all dead now—they used to be saying it's the topper all out I'd have made of an egg-merchant. And Billeen's fortune not counting the halfpence and farthings is three hundred and twenty pounds to a tick, Michael Clancy.

BILLEEN.—'Twas the dots and the nought-noughts in the dotted bills did it, and when I took out that deposit receipt for a heap of them the time I came back, everyone saying 'twas a million I was after putting in the Bank, yourself saying it as well as the next, Michael Clancy, didn't I come to believe it was a million and that I was ninety-nine times richer than I thought I was not having rightly comprehended as I imagined the value and the meaning of the dots and the nought-noughts.

CLANCY (*dully, savagely*).—The dots and the nought-noughts !

BILLEEN (*in reminiscent fashion*).—and anyway—and I don't know why—I was never able to bring myself to look at that deposit receipt. But I now recall that my cousin, Michael Foran, that keeps a dry goods store in West 49th Street—199b is the number of his house, Michael Clancy—he did say to me surely and I leaving Chicago : “ there's £1,850 in the wallet by you,” said he, “ and be careful of it,” said he.

CLANCY.—Only £1,850 ! But if you had that much now itself or even the half of it, you might be able to give some help to the friends. For the four cows and the bit of land you bought you only paid £550 all told : 'tis the same clothes you're wearing you brought back from America, and a farthing you never gave to your own ; whilst out of the little all you ever had there is over a thousand pounds gone to Hong Kong between the Giltinans and the Carmodys, with every fair day, market day or sports day would rise over you in Abbeyfeale, Duagh or Listowel, 'twould be the case with you of sweets or things for Bridie or pies or fal-als for Madge. Faith, it wasn't queer the priest was expressing himself, a solid ten quid in his pocket and nothing in Michael Clancy's but futility (*with sudden wildness taking off his hat and turning towards Shuwawn*), Anamon dhoul it's mad I'm going entirely. (*Bending*). It's a good stroke is in that long bony arm by you still, Shuwawn Daly, and take this stick and smash this skull and knock what's in it out of it, for the brains that are in that head have no right to be in the head of Michael Clancy.

BILLEEN (*excitedly*).—It's rightly cracked you are, and the woman up to the age for doting. In the name of God don't think of it, Shuwawn. And I won't leave you minus entirely Michael Clancy (*going to Michael*). And I'm thinking there's just a hundred in this bundle of notes (*hands bundle to Michael who becomes suddenly mollified*). Poh! why wouldn't I? We'll be well enough off with over two hundred and twenty and our bit of a farm and our four cows, and Shuwawn has her pension. Anyway, 't isn't the loss of the millions, but the queer marrying is troubling me most at the present moment.

CLANCY (*counting in a satisfied way*).—Tin and tin make twenty and tin makes thirty—thirty-five—forty—

OLD JANE (*grimly*).—What concern is a queer marrying and what concern is deposit receipts. But was there ever known the likes of my disappointment and never will I have what I thought I'd have—the feel of the grand gold. Fifteen years dreaming over it—the big pieces of the yellow gold, the golden guineas and the gold dollars thick and a great weight on them, and the fine white money; they going through my fingers and I taking them up in fistsful and fistsful; (*almost blubbing*), the jingly, Michael Clancy, and the bing! bing!

MICHAEL (*finishing counting*).—Tin makes a hundred. (*Puts bundle into side pocket with an air of content and satisfaction*). Well no good in lamenting now, anyway, Old Jane and Billeen needn't be having his worry no less, and the pair of ye married enough.

BILLEEN. —Married, but not as could properly be said—celebrated. That's what they always say in Chicago when people are rightly married—they say the marriage was celebrated, Michael Clancy.

CLANCY.—Well now, that is smart talk, Billeen; for in the very last number of the "Kerry Star," the paper did refer to a marriage between two respectables as having been celebrated—upon my soul it did.

BILLEEN (*sententiously, with an air of superiority*).—If it did itself, it's from Chicago it got it, Michael Clancy. But it's alluding I am, since the priest didn't do the suitable in the line of celebrating, couldn't we make some shift to give an air of celebration to the marrying ourselves? We can buy a ring to-morrow, but in other respects we might make some little

shapes. (*To Old Jane*), Anyway, will we kiss? (*Shuwaren and Michael nod approvingly*).

OLD JANE (*observing nod, rising as it were unwillingly, with dreary intonation*). If so be, then, sure I suppose we might as well.

(*Old Jane and Billeen move slowly towards one another, showing signs of antagonism rather than affection. They embrace grimly and determinedly, and a loud kiss is heard*).

CURTAIN.

BEYOND THE CATECHISM

By Austin Clarke

IT was darkfall as we hurried past the terrible, shadowy trees and came to the wicket. All might have happened in a story, for the diamond panes of the cottage, beside the church, were merry with lamplight. But there were tiny paths, edged with box in the little garden, which I had to explore before they disappeared completely. I can still remember those scarlet and white flowers shaped like stars which I saw there for the first time and can still remember their perfume. The night was coming faster; voices were mingling at the cottage door, and I knew that I had only a few minutes to see all these strange flowers. Then, in some confused way, I met Theresa in that dimming garden. I wanted to stay and look at the starry flowers. But that little girl, with a toss of her ringlets, and with the authority of one who had already been a month in the country, led me down the small winding paths to a yard gate.

"I want to show you something," she said in a mysterious tone, and I obeyed her implicitly.

So while our elders were still talking on the door step, she led me across a cobbled yard to a shed.

"Look!" she said. "Look!"

I cannot remember seeing anything at all, but she was point-

ing into the darkness of the shed, and certainly, I must have obeyed her and leaned through the doorway in great curiosity. But soon the calling of voices startled us.

"Theresa, Theresa. Wherever are you, children?"

We hastened in without a word.

But the next morning, much to my astonishment, there was a strange air of severity above our small heads, a foreboding silence in the cottage, which dashed all those feelings of joy which I should have felt on my first morning in the country. Something terrible had happened the night before. A broody hen had been frightened off its clutch by one or other of us. We were both summoned to judgment. The very charge was inexplicable to me and I was unable to understand. All I knew was that something very dreadful had happened and that I was innocent. Even grownups can prove poor witnesses under cross-examination, and I was oppressed by that sense of injustice which all children feel so acutely.

"He did it!"

I can still remember my astonishment and confusion when that little girl, shaking her curls, pointed an accusing finger at me and blandly told how I had led her astray.

The country itself was even more deceptive than that small Eve whom I met in the garden where the flowers only came out at twilight. A furze bush, the twisted wires of a fence, the green marshy grass in the corner of the small fields were all capable of sudden and unexpected treachery. At home I knew every corner of the small back yard and garden. The centre path was the main track for express trains, the rockery in the far corner was Port Arthur, for ever defended by the Russians, for ever stormed and almost taken in assault by the Japanese. When I went for messages down to Capel Street, if I kept to the pavement and hurried past the children who were playing their part also in the Russo-Japanese war, if, in fact, I obeyed the common sense rules of travelling, I was quite safe. But in the country the fields and turf banks were strange and unmapped. Nothing was what it seemed and everything was something else. The furze bushes waited until we were almost past and then struck at us viciously, the fencing wire lay in ambush to tear our clothes, the grass tumbled us into depths of mud. Joy and tears were never so close and we were always falling into mischief and out

of mischief. Those fairy tales which my sisters read out to me sometimes or told me when we were walking past the sweet shops in Capel Street all seemed to be true. Nothing was quite what it seemed and if one lit on fairy gold it would almost certainly turn into a handful of withered leaves. There was an animus in nature against which I had to struggle, for Dublin was far away and I was evidently in a region beyond the strict guidance of the catechism.

Now that the reservoir dam at Poulaphouca has been completed, flood is rising to the last ridge below Vallemount and another sky has tumbled into the heather. The narrow lands from which my father's people came have vanished under water and the trout are too heavy to jump. But in those far-off days when I first saw Vallemount there was one sunny height where we were all safe from the animus of nature. We could roll happily down the slope of polished grass or pull to our heart's content the tiny golden trefoil. It was exciting to nip those lucky three leaves almost at the root and weave them into bracelets and many loops. We were safe, and yet not entirely so, for there was a mystery among the mountains at Wicklow Gap. Whenever we looked south we could see the small farmhouse at the top of the last hill below the mountains. An old woman of fabulous age lived there, and my eldest sister had brought us to see her early one evening. As we came to the farmhouse we passed into an immense sunny stillness. No dogs barked and along the wall of the cobbled yard the hens were drowsing and scarcely lifted a grey eyelid as we went by. There was a well-head in the middle of the yard with a rusty chain and we were afraid to look down into the horrible depth below. We stole to the open door and peeped in. A clock was clicking loudly in the silent kitchen, we saw a drawn curtain and knew that the centenarian must be asleep. So we never saw her, but often after that, as we played on the sunny slope, we were aware of that distant farmhouse on the hill-top and it disturbed us vaguely like a legend. There is indeed something legendary in that terrible waiting of the aged as the human faculties slowly decay until memory itself persists only in the sharp anguish of dream; and who can name that minute before dawn when such poor creatures of a century waken and believe that they are long since dead? When, in later years, I came on the story of the Old Woman of Beare,

the great Knee-woman of Ireland, and other mythic personages, I thought always of that silent farm-yard, over which the sun had stopped, and of the hens drowsing outside the empty stable, lazily blinking a grey eyelid.

On the evening before we left Valleymount the animus of nature suddenly increased. It happened that I was taken for a walk by my elders. We went along the sandy shore, the green-edged creeks of the King's River and as it was the first time that I had been near this lonely winding river, I had brought with me for this especial trip a glass jar complete with the inevitable string. It was a long journey and, as my elders walked through the twilight, we passed marvellous pools along the edge of the river strand, full of darting minnow. I wanted to linger at these pools and catch some of the minnow, but those elders hurried on and every time I hesitated with my glass jar at some pool, they called to me to come along. Darkness was setting in as we started back on our homeward journey along the river sands. The pools were still glimmering, but I could no longer find again those in which I had seen so many pinkeens—and then I came to a pool which I seemed to remember. This was my last chance and, though I was afraid of remaining behind even for a few moments in the half light, I took the risk. In the dimness I saw that the pool was full of little fish and I dipped in the jar. The water rushed in with a satisfying gurgle, and as I lifted up the glass jar again, I could see even in the darkness that it was full of minnow. I could scarcely wait until we had got back to the cottage again. As soon as we were inside, I ensconced myself in my favourite place, beside the harmonium. I held up the glass jar in the lamplight. I looked into a small mysterious green world. But instead of those lovely minnow I saw a sight which filled me with horror. The minnow had been changed mysteriously into little monsters which were magnified by the thick glass. Were they specimens, as the learned might say, of hydrobatidæ or rhynchota? It did not occur to me that these struggling forms were a few half-drowned water-skaters and spiders which had been engulfed in the glass jar. I only felt that here once more was the treachery of nature and that in the country nothing is what it seems and everything is something else.

But my last experience of the country on that first visit was

yet stranger. Farewells were over ; the pony and trap had gone ; and we were waiting at Featherbed Lane for the steam tram from Poulaphouca. It was almost night but, greatly daring, I strayed back around the corner of the lane. Suddenly I stopped in superstitious dread ; for there, black and horned against the last light of the west on the lofty bank above the laneway, was a motionless god-like image. By some obscure intuition I recognised the awful mithraic form. The ancient myths still linger even in the Liberties of many a city. My father had told me so often the story of the Brown Bull and of the Horn of Plenty, had told it to me so patiently, each time, that I knew it by heart and in my sleep. The Bull, in that vestigial story was benevolent despite its supernatural strength. But this black image against the sky never moved in its terrible watchfulness. Such seconds of fear become as valuable to us as years. But for those seconds I do not think that I would have glimpsed later that ancient piety and awe hidden in the cattle stories of Connaught and Ulster.

. . . . Womenfolk

Quitting the patchwork quilts upon the shore
Had topped the family cauldron on the hook
With handy meal, gossiping of the far
Blue country when a king and red-haired queen
Fell out.

Storm crowded in the far sea-mountains
Of Achill, broken into unploughed purple
Against the thundering herds of cloud driven
From the waterish hurdles of the west ; by darkfall
Strange voices moved among the desolate peaks
Of war and the dim running islands gathered
Their brood of sails for men had seen the Bull
Of Connaught rage upon the shaken ridge
Of the world. . . .

I was back again with my elders by the track ; and soon the steam tram, with its cheerful infernal noise and brimstone, was rushing past suddenly seen hedges towards us. In its noise and smut we were swept back to the city and the catechism.

PAUL VERLAINE OR THE FOOLISH VIRGIN

By A. J. Leventhal

ALMOST half a century has passed since Bibi-la-Purée; bohemian familiar of Verlaine who bore so striking a resemblance to Louis XI, stole the umbrellas of the distinguished literary mourners which were parked under one of the trees of the cemetery of the Batignolles at the poet's funeral. Yeats recalls this anecdote (which, in another version, is given a more Gallic if less authentic flavour by making Bibi resemble our Saviour) and adds the not too delectable tale of the suffering bard's search in an English dictionary that resulted in his euphemistic if inaccurate description of his leg trouble as erysipelas.

These are but two of the many stories that helped to form the Verlaine legend—a legend that grew round him even during his lifetime. What more promising subject than the vagabond poet with the Mongolian head (Socratic say some) and simian features which, however, the sympathetic brush of Carrière removed, showing us a noble face pale and without blemish.

Anatole France put him into two of his books. He is the drunk in *Gestas*, a story contained in the volume *L'Étui de Nacre*, who after a pub crawl is overcome by remorse and a desire to go to confession. But a priest not being immediately available, he creates a scene in the church. He cannot understand why his pious intentions cannot be gratified as expeditiously as his thirst. This is pure caricature. The poet Choulette in *Le Lys Rouge* is nearer to the true picture—nearer at any rate to contemporaneous opinion. He is drawn here as a mixture of saint and faun, at one time indulging his coarse appetites and at another trying to save the world and the church by exercising the virtues of poverty.

Verlaine's story has often been told. In the earlier versions he is described by friends anxious to preserve for posterity the most acceptable explanation of his disordered and disorderly life. The blame is placed in the first instance on the rascalion Rimbaud who is cast for the role of tempter. This part has been

assigned to himself by Rimbaud in his strange prose-poem (for want of another term) *Délires*, in which it is generally agreed that he is the "Époux Infernal" and Verlaine "La Vierge Folle." "C'est un démon," he makes the latter say of himself, "ce n'est pas un homme." This poem is very important as showing the nature of the relationship between the two poets as well as their own natures: the vacillating, dependent, feminine Verlaine and the proud seductive youth leading his "pitoyable frère" towards an unbelievable and for Verlaine unattainable ideal.

The shooting at Rimbaud in Brussels ending in Verlaine's incarceration is the most notorious incident in the story of their companionship. Rimbaud was even here held to be responsible, being cited as giving evidence in court that led to the conviction of his best friend who, in his drunkenness, could not have been aware of his actions. No shot outside politics has had greater reverberations; its echo was even louder than Oliver Wendell Holmes' kiss. The Verlainophiles battled out its implications with the Rimbaldians in brochure and pamphlet, in lecture and counter-lecture, in quarto and in octavo. In the end the Rimbaldians won. This, not because of a more vigorous array of facts, but because the new movement in poetry found itself moving away from the murmur of the Verlainian music and had tuned itself into the stridency of Rimbaud's more powerful imagination. It is all too often forgotten, however, that it was Verlaine, disguised anagrammatically as Pauvre Lélian, who drew public attention to Rimbaud's work in his *Poètes Maudits*. His discovery might have been much longer delayed had not the older poet persistently championed his verses, stressing their unique quality and influence on his own work.

At first it seemed that one of the poets could never be mentioned without calling the other to mind. Verlaine called up Rimbaud by a natural association of ideas and in that order. But even in the first decade of this century it was Rimbaud who came to be considered the more important writer, Verlaine following as an echo that has become fainter with the years. It is not generally recognised how much Rimbaud owed to Verlaine. It was Verlaine who was the first to appreciate the genius in the boy's early verses. To satisfy the boy's *Wanderlust* he sacrificed his domestic happiness, the bourgeois dream of conjugal bliss which

he conjured up in *La Bonne Chanson*. It might be said that the family album picture of

Le foyer, la lueur étroite de lampe ;
La rêverie avec le doigt contre la tempe.

was doomed in advance. Yet he loved his young wife and looked forward after the day's work to

La fatigue charmante et l'attente adorée
De l'ombre nuptiale et de la douce nuit.

He believed in Rimbaud sufficiently to abandon home with its ties and roots that might have brought him the peace for which he definitely craved throughout his life, and which he gave up to join his young friend in a wild vagabondage.

It was Verlaine who paid expenses, dipping deeply, according to Lepelletier, into the family patrimony and so helping to bring about the poverty that was to weigh on him so heavily later in his life. Right royally must he have banged his coin on the tables and counters of the bars and *estaminets* of Belgium and London where the couple mixed Guinness with Brussels beer :

Entre autres blâmables excès,
Je crois que nous bûmes de tout,
Depuis les plus grands vins français
Jusqu'à ce faro, jusqu'au stout.

Rimbaud's influence on Verlaine's poetic art is not questioned, but was there another lyrist living in France who could have assimilated the alchemy of the word as propounded by the young rebel and produced so nice an amalgam of verbal gold ? Private poetry was to come later. The Mallarmé hermetism in its cold crystal was yet to be followed by the wild unchecked imagery of surrealist hallucination. It was out of this influence in his prison castle that he wrote his *Romance sans Paroles* with its " musique avant toute chose," subordinating sense to sound, evolving by vowel craft and word grouping new verse harmonies, translating the nuance and the fleeting impression into stanzas which he called significantly " ariettes." Their inevitable recurrence in anthologies and the modern sneer at non-philosophic poetry will not dim the appeal of those moods of melancholy which find

musical expression in such poems as *Il pleure dans mon coeur, Les sanglots longs, O triste, triste était mon âme*. Nor can we forget those English and Belgian "landscapes" and "aquarelles" in which he preceded the impressionists in painting by some fifteen years through the medium of words. Verlaine was no visionary, even in his religious moods, nor a prophet like Rimbaud but he possessed enough vision to recognise the seer in his young companion and to profit within the limits of his genius from his art gospel. In his passionate friendship he placed him highest among the fallen angels in his fantasy *Crimen Amoris*, so high as to be able to declare :

Oh ! je serai celui-là qui sera Dieu.

Even in the ascetic cell of the Mons prison when the "Foolish Virgin" turned to religion for solace he could not exclude the "Infernal Husband" from his mind, writing of him in verse and to him in sincere prose in the hope that he too might seek repose in the Church. This is the period of *Sagesse* which stamps Verlaine as inimitable. The confidential murmur of *Romances sans Paroles* was a new note in French poetry which, once recognised, brought inevitable imitators. No one has even attempted to reproduce the piety, the simplicity, the humility of *Sagesse*, nor its style free from all affectation nor its religion free from all dogma. His conversion, however, does not carry the poet into a wholly spiritual sphere. Inescapably the material world intrudes in his most mystical ecstasies. He prostrates himself before the Virgin Mary with an amorous abandon that bears all the stigmata of mundane love. This confusion of fervour, however, is more marked in his later religious poetry. *Sagesse* is a penitent poet's rosary of renunciation ; through prayer he sees

La vérité comme une étoile.

For Huysmans the Church has had in Paul Verlaine its greatest poet since the middle ages.

But the "Foolish Virgin" could not keep alight the perpetual lamp of religion. When the flame flickered truth revealed itself to him, not in mystic adoration of the "Père et Fils," but in the exaltation produced by potions of Pernod Fils. No great effort is required to understand and having understood to have sympathy

with the weak, the human poet vacillating between sin and repentance, between an innate call to respectability and a more urgent craving for degradation. With an easy psychology he accepted himself as the *homo duplex* (so styled contemporaneously) and shuttled more and more unhesitatingly from the chalice to the clouded absinthe glass and back again to the confessional. He reduced his duality to a formula, publishing alternately works in which there was nothing to shock "La délicatesse d'aucune oreille catholique" and volumes in which he did not feel himself called upon to exercise any restraint with regard to religious susceptibility. Thus after *Sagesse* comes *Jadis et Naguère*; after *Amour, Parallèlement*; after *Bonheur, Chansons pour Elles*; after *Liturgies Intimes, Odes en son Honneur*.

Verlaine is the poet of the daily round of joy and sorrow. He has not the quotidian naiveté of Jammes, that other religious poet whose ingenuousness was half his charm and who learned from Verlaine that eloquence should be strangled at birth. Axel's castle could be no fit habitat for him. The prison, the hospital, the workhouse, a life à la Villon but no ivory tower. Verlaine would have had no use for Villiers de l'Isle Adam's servants. He did his own living.

In the England of the Nineties there were aristocratic yearnings for the remote poet's peak. But there were also those (and they are among the best remembered) who would not relegate the privileges of living to their butlers. Not since the eighteenth century does such a conformity of direction show itself in the literary striving of both France and Britain as in this period. *Fin-de-siècle* can be used with equal validity to describe the tendencies in both countries with which we associate the end of the nineteenth century. The life and works of Dowson, Davidson, Beardsley, Francis Thompson, Lionel Johnson occur to one to match the "decadence" in France.

Lionel Johnson, who might have been welcomed by Maritain as a neo-Thomist in the ascendancy which his intellect held over his imagination, would seem at first sight to exclude himself from the current of the decade. Yet he may be seen in his poem *The Dark Angel* as subject to as much temptation and remorse as Verlaine. The testimony of his friends suggests that despite his Celtic origin he put an Anglo-Saxon face on his excesses.

Nevertheless for the learned Lionel and for the " Foolish Virgin " there is the " Époux Infernal " :

Through thee, the gracious Muses turn
To Furies, O mine Enemy !
And all the things of beauty burn
With flames of evil ecstasy.

Thou art the whisper in the gloom,
The hinting tone, the haunting laugh . . .

Like Verlaine he succumbs to drink and like him he will in the end, the poet who has found grace, defeat damnation. The Dark Angel will not triumph.

Lonely, unto the Lone I go ;
Divine, to the Divinity.

There is much to be said for the existence of a *Zeitgeist* when we find that about the same time as Verlaine published in the review called *La Lutèce* his famous *Art Poétique* with the stanza :

De la musique encore et toujours !
Que ton vers soit la chose envolée
Qu'on sent, qui fuit d'une âme en allée
Vers d'autres cieux à d'autres amours,

the young Johnson writing in 1885 and as afterwards posthumously collected in *Some Winchester Letters* (since withdrawn from circulation at the request of his relatives) declared :

" There is nothing on earth—perhaps not even music, not even painting—of equal divinity with a single line of pure word music, a single thought caught from passing emotions and changing aspects."

Had poor, gentle Francis Thompson, himself a drug addict, a denizen of hospitals with periods of destitution, been asked to pass judgment on his fellow Catholic poet across the Channel, he might have quoted from a tract against mortification his own unexpectedly robust remark : " He that sins strongly has the stuff of sanctity rather than the languid sinner."

Rimbaud, the " démon," tempted Verlaine with his invitation to an " immense et déraisonné dérèglement de tous les sens," but

in England the Oxford don Walter Pater was writing a handbook for the decadents. True, the second edition of *The Renaissance* revoked and modified the offending paragraph of the "Conclusion." Yet, as it now stands, it must still have provided a justification for an intensity of living. "Not the fruit of experience," he says, "but experience itself is the end." And in *Marius the Epicurean*, to cite also only one sentence: "Let me be sure then . . . that I miss no detail of the life of realised consciousness in the present!"

Gosse's critical education could not be complete without making contact with the strange, limping poet of the Latin Quarter. This was achieved, as Gosse tells the story in *The Savoy*, after a long man-hunt in the "boîtes" of the Boul. 'Mich., the quarry being finally run to the "sous-sol" of the Soleil d'Or. Verlaine referred to Gosse as "the very sympathetic journalist"—a word without contempt in French but which was perhaps also without malicious connotation in the England of 1893.

Despite the parallel movement in literature, despite the fact that he spent quite a considerable time in England and that many of his poems have English titles and are inspired by the contours of the city and the countryside, he seems to have scarcely touched English life. His leisure, when he taught for a livelihood, was passed in the purlieus of Soho among members of the French colony. It was only in the last years of his life when he had attained fame as well as notoriety, when he had been proclaimed King of the Poets and when a movement was set afoot to make him a Member of the Academy that he visited London as a celebrity.

The noise made by the "jeunes" round their elected leader had its cross-channel echo. George Moore was interpreting him to the Sassenach whilst making notes for his own series of confessions. Arthur Symons not only interpreted Verlaine and his Paris with the then unique impressionist style, which he has succeeded in maintaining as his own, but he translated the poet, recapturing in English as no one else his muted music. John Gray vied with Symons in his translations but soon resigned to embrace priesthood. To Father Gray were addressed the last letters from Aubrey Beardsley, "the infant prodigy of the decadence," just received into the Catholic Church. Ernest Dowson, living dangerously in the underworld, was likewise translating

Verlaine and heading a dirge over a dead loved one with the French poet's melancholy couplet :—

Ah, dans ces mornes séjours
Les jamais sont les toujours.

Yeats is living on the fringe of Parisian bohemia, making marginal notes, some to be printed in *The Savoy* and *The Dome*, whilst others waited for the later drawing of the trembling veil.

Neither Yeats nor Moore nor Synge, who had all lived in the very centre of this resurgence of religious poetry, were able to bring to Ireland anything of the Verlainean contribution to poetic prayer. Here, surely, one would have thought was the soil for the aureoled orison of verse. There was indeed a renaissance in the island of saints and scholars, but the inspired archaeologists prevailed and led by Yeats and A.E., they sought their mystic inspiration in the ancient sagas of the Gael. There is still little sign of a virile Catholic poetry except in the verse and poetic plays of Austin Clarke. He may, perhaps, prove to be a pioneer, not in the simple, devotional verse in the manner of Verlaine, but in a new mode which may add to his sophisticated melancholy, redolent in all that was best in the "hidden Ireland," the simple faith of the peasant.

GOETHE'S PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH IRELAND

By John Hennig, Ph.D.

IN his paper on Goethe's relations with Sir Charles Ludwig Giesecke, the founder of the mineralogy of Ireland, Professor Gilbert Waterhouse has given as his opinion that "it was neither politics nor literature that roused Goethe's interest in Ireland but natural science".¹ On the occasion of a recent performance of "The Magic Flute" in Dublin, I had an opportunity of pointing out that Giesecke, who became professor of mineralogy

¹ Proceedings R.I.A., 1933.

in the Royal Dublin Society in 1814, and in later years, was instrumental in getting "the baron de Goethe" elected member of the Royal Irish Academy, was identical with the inferior Viennese actor who, in 1791, was entrusted with the adaptation from Wieland's *Oberon* of the libretto of Mozart's last Opera. Whilst greatly admiring "the deeper meaning" which had been given to the "tale of Lulu" underlying the libretto of "The Magic Flute," Goethe himself, like most of his contemporaries, was unaware of the identity of the famous Dublin mineralogist with the author of that libretto.

Professor Waterhouse has collected the various references found in Goethe's diaries and letters to Ireland and Dublin in connection with his relations with Sir Charles Ludwig Giesecke. These relations were mainly based on Goethe's mineralogical and meteorological studies. Giesecke enriched Goethe's extensive collections of minerals by rare specimens collected on his journeys to Greenland, Cornwall and the various parts of Ireland, and, on the other hand, procured for Goethe the barometer readings of Dublin of February, 1825, a date chosen by Goethe for a study of the relationship existing between the barometer readings and the altitude of places compared over wide latitudes. I have been told by Professor Pollak that those barometer readings were probably taken in the meteorological observatory in the Botanic Gardens, Dublin. The international extent of Goethe's correspondence may be gathered from the fact, that, whilst Dublin was chosen as the most westerly station, Charkov was the most easterly. Based on these observations, Goethe published his study on "the Causes of barometer fluctuations."¹

The more interesting points in his correspondence with Giesecke are the various mentions made of Irishmen whom Giesecke sent to him. These were either tourists who, whilst visiting Weimar, wished to meet the great man, or youngsters who were on the Continent for the study of languages. As to the spreading of Goethe's fame to Ireland, I may note that the earliest re-action found in William Preston's "Reflections on the particularities of style in the late German writers"² was most unfavourable. In Mr. Preston's opinion, Goethe (of whom he apparently knew only "Goetz," his first drama) was "the great

¹ Sophie-edition, series ii, vol. 12, p. 59 foll., map. on p. 78.

² Transactions R.I.A., viii, c. 1800.

patriarch of the terrific and ferocious school, which established the cannibalism on the theater". But later on, several Irishmen of distinction visited Weimar for the purpose of acquainting themselves with Goethe. There was the Right Honourable George Knox, the mineralogist, who was there in Spring, 1825, with his sons. Then came "the Irishman Joy" with another collection of "fine minerals from Giesecke," and soon after this, the diploma of the Royal Irish Academy was brought to Weimar by Mr. Knox's son, who was then to study the German language and literature. After his arrival, Goethe wrote: "Your (Giesecke's) countrymen will all be welcome here; these young men are popular with my children (August and his wife, Ottilia) with whom English literature is the order of the day." Goethe adds that he takes "a personal interest in their (the young Irishmen's) progress in acquiring the language and often talks to them." The natives of the three kingdoms formed a kind of colony in that city. In October, 1826, Goethe mentions the visit of "Herr Dutmall, an Irishman." In March, 1829, he refers to a "letter from an Irishman (George) Seymour" who was about to be accommodated in Weimar by Eckermann. A few months later Goethe enters in his diary: "Lunch with Eckermann. The Englishman (!) Seymour has started translating my biography. I saw the first half and, so far as can be judged in a foreign language, it is quite readable." (Mr. Seymour apparently did not publish his translation; the first English translation of 'Aus meinem Leben' had appeared five years previously). On November 2nd, 1830, Goethe's "Agenda" and diary mention "an Irishman named Archer, who in a short time made himself acquainted with German language and literature."

Writing to Sulpiz Boisserée, the great advocate of the revival of medieval art on the Continent, Goethe said: "The Irish are certainly the most popular in my house." This remark is a sufficient justification of a closer study of Goethe's personal relations with Ireland, a subject, which, moreover, reveals Goethe's true significance as the most universal genius ever produced in any nation. References to Ireland, Irishmen and Irish affairs are found scattered through the 138 volumes of the gigantic edition of Goethe's works, known as the Sophie or Weimar-edition. These references date from practically all periods of Goethe's life and virtually embrace all spheres of life. His references to Irish

politics have been collected by Karl Blind in a study inaccessible in this country, whilst his knowledge of English and Irish literature has been investigated by Dr. Boyd. It will take a special study to discuss Goethe's knowledge of ancient Ireland as conveyed to him through the Ossianic enthusiasm of his youth and, in later years, through the study of O'Halloran's *Antiquities*. Goethe's knowledge of Ireland as, in fact his knowledge of most other subjects was personal rather than book-knowledge. When we consider that Goethe never crossed the English, let alone the Irish Channel, this fact makes his knowledge of Ireland most remarkable.

Goethe has been one of the few Continental scholars who realized that Ireland is something else than "one of the British Isles"; in fact, that there is a fundamental difference between the English and the Irish. In his diary of the Campaign in France (1792) he remarks that he freed himself of the sentimentality of Werther by the study of Sterne, and he hints at the ambiguity of the racial characteristics found in Sterne when saying that he combines "a gentle passionate ascetism with the British sense of humour." In later years Goethe realized more clearly the distinctive character of Irish humour as displayed in "Irish bulls," (a subject discussed in his letter to Zelter, dated March 4th, 1829): "The very nice story of the servant, who could not imagine how hot and warm water produce luke-warm water, comes just in time. It is like the Irish bulls, which originate from a strange intellectual heaviness and of which much could be said in the psychological sense. There is another one: An Irishman lies in bed; people rush into his room crying: "Save yourself, the house is on fire!" "Why," he replies, "I am only a boarder here." "In this second period of his study of Sterne (1825-'30), Goethe summarized the difference between the Irish and the English in a concise aphorism on Sterne and Goldsmith, saying: "The highly ironic humour of both of them, Sterne inclined towards formlessness, Goldsmith moving freely in the strictest form."¹ As usually Goldsmith may be regarded as more Irish than Sterne, this statement may seem curious to Irish readers, but Goethe had probably been influenced by the fact that Sterne's mother was of Catholic Irish stock, whilst Goldsmith was from both parents an offspring of the ascendancy. (For Goldsmith's

¹ See James Boyd—Goethe's knowledge of English Literature, Oxf. (1932), p. 103.

Irish relations, see Stephen Gwynn, "Oliver Goldsmith," p. 16). Of Goldsmith, Goethe says: "He is an Englishman and has the advantages offered by his country and his nation,"¹ whilst in Sterne he finds "that quick change from seriousness to joke, from interest to indifference, from sorrow to joy, which is said to lie in the Irish character."² In the latter statement, the words "is said" call for special attention. A few weeks before writing down those words Goethe entered in his diary: "Went for a walk with Ottilia. About the difference of the British nations and their characteristics, especially the character of the Irish" (March 29th, 1828).

One of the main influences in Goethe's relations to Ireland was Ottilia, who married his ill-fated son, August, and became the devoted nurse and companion of the aged poet. A note written by Goethe as early as Summer, 1820, bears testimony to Ottilia's interest or even passion for Ireland:

"His Excellency the Viceroy of Ireland
recommends himself and the nation
to the patriotic Madam de Goethe
by the well-known Evergreen
with best wishes for her recovery."

When in the summer of 1825 "the Irishman Mr. Joy and his ladies" arrived in Weimar, Goethe arranged that they and Ottilia should make an excursion to the castle of Belvedere near Weimar. After that visit Goethe wrote to Giesecke: "Should more such distinguished travellers come to visit this neighbourhood, they will be always welcome. Direct them to me personally or to my daughter-in-law Frau Geh. Kammerrätin v. Goethe, and they will be sure of a hearty welcome." An undated note (No. 107) to Ottilia saying: "What was the name of the young man who brought me the parcel from Dublin?" doubtlessly refers to the above-mentioned son of Mr. Knox. On September 25th, 1826, Goethe wrote to Ulrike, Ottilia's sister, of "the pleasant conversations" they had in his house with "foreigners from the western and northern islands." He makes special mention of the various presents by which these visitors enriched "Ottilia's book-case," and he himself acquired various books on

¹ Sophie-ed. series I, vol. xxxvii, p. 343.

² *Ibid.*, vol. xlii, ps. 204, 353.

Ireland. In 1810, Anthony O'Hara, who had been Russia's last Minister to the Independent Order of the Knights of Malta, had presented him with O'Halloran's *Antiquities*. Professor Waterhouse drew attention to the enigmatic entry found in Goethe's diary for October 8th, 1829, on "a book by the Irishman Sheil on the present state of Ireland." Is "Sheil" a mis-spelling for "Shiel"? A few months later, on August 2nd, 1830, Goethe says that he has read "*Scenes populaires en Irlande par M. Shiel, Paris, 1830,*" a book in which he notices "inestimable clearness of presentation and style." This is probably a French translation of the famous sketches of the Irish bar, which were published in 1822-23, and, to this day, are one of the best sources of information concerning the leading celebrities of the time in Ireland. (Though Goethe also took a lively interest in the political life of Ireland, he apparently did not know the "Survey of Irish history" made by D. H. Hegerisch (Altona, 1806), for the purpose of promoting "a correct understanding of the causes of the Rebellion, the Union of 1801 and Catholic Emancipation," probably the earliest work on modern Irish history written by a German author from an Irish stand-point).

In 1827, in the above-mentioned letter to Sulpiz Boisserée, Goethe said: We have here "innumerable Englishmen, men and women. My daughter-in-law made them very welcome and I saw then and talked to them more or less. If you know how to take such visitors, there is no doubt that they give you in the end some idea of the nation, indeed, I might say of all three nations." Here, whilst following the habit, still prevailing on the Continent, of calling "English" all the inhabitants of the "British Isles," Goethe clearly distinguishes the Irish, which, as we have seen, he subsequently calls "the most popular in his house." (Six years previously, when reading Jacobsen's "*Letters on the latest English poets,*" Goethe noted fifteen names and only to that of Thomas Moore he added "Irishman, born at Dublin on March 28th, 1780.") It is obvious that personal intercourse with Irishmen was Goethe's main source of information on Ireland, Irish affairs and the national characteristics of the Irish. In this respect, Ottilia's influence can hardly be over-rated.

On January 22nd, 1832, a few months before his death, Goethe entered in his diary: "Later Ottilia, reporting on some newly-arrived books on Ireland." A similar reference to Ottilia's

help in his acquiring a literary knowledge of Ireland is found in 1830/31 when "Ottilia reported on Byron's correspondence edited by Moore," and "on the Life of Fitzgerald" (March 3rd, 1830 and October 13th, 1831). On the latter occasion, the visit of Charles and James Sterling, sons of the English Consul at Genoa (Charles, in later years, was "Wölfchen's" tutor), induced Goethe to remark: "It is most noteworthy how Thomas Moore and the British in general understand how to make such a book, entirely collective and nevertheless a masterly amiable whole. That comes from their continuously agitated public life."

In December, 1829, Goethe wrote to Thomas Carlyle: "It is well known indeed that the inhabitants of the three kingdoms are not at all living in the best possible agreement."¹ At the same time, in a comparative study of the political events of Europe in 1828 and 1829 he exemplifies his theory that a number of "Krisen," originated in 1828, were partly solved, partly absorbed in the subsequent year: "1828: The crisis of the Irish question—1829: decided in favour of the Catholics,—new demands: Protestant Church endowment threatened—illness of the King." From Eckerman's Conversations with Goethe we may gather that this study probably originated in April, 1829. Upon April 3, Eckermann enters: "From the Jesuits and their wealth conversation turned upon the Catholic and Irish emancipation. Goethe gave as his opinion that an emancipation 'with preventive clauses' would be 'ineffectual with Catholics.' Upon April 7, Eckermann records Goethe's famous remark: 'We cannot get a clear notion of the state of Ireland, and the subject is too intricate. But this we can see, that Ireland suffers from evils which will not be removed by any measure, and therefore, of course, not by emancipation. If it has hitherto been unfortunate for Ireland to endure her evils alone, it is now unfortunate that England is also drawn into them. Then, no confidence can be put in the Catholics. We see with what difficulty the two million of Protestants of Ireland have kept their ground hitherto against the preponderate five millions of Catholics. . . . The Catholics do not agree among themselves, but they always unite against a Protestant. They are like a pack of hounds, who bite one another, but when a stag comes in view, they all unite im-

¹ Sophie-ed., Ser. I, vol. xlii, p. 205.

mediately to run it down." Goethe's appreciation of the political conditions in Ireland may have had some foundation in his geographical knowledge, unusual on the Continent. Giesecke's various mineralogical gifts had made him acquainted with the names of most of the counties in Ireland, *e.g.*, he makes special mention of Limerick. On May 21st, 1827, Goethe mentions the reception from England of a map of Ireland.

On August 12th, 1822, Goethe entered in his diary: "Received a letter of an Irish lady residing at Bremen." He does not tell us her name, nor can we derive it from the material found in the Sophie-edition. In any case, it was not the great Irish friend of Ottilia. Anna Jameson arrived at Weimar after Goethe's death, but her correspondence with Ottilia is perhaps the most impressive document of Ottilia's sympathy with Ireland.¹ Mrs. Jameson's maiden name was Anna Brownell Murphy. She was born in Dublin as the daughter of a young artist who was connected with the United Irishmen, but, before the rising, he had gone to England in the hope of improving his professional prospects. In 1828 his daughter married Robert Sympson Jameson, a young barrister, from whom she soon separated. Anna Jameson made a brilliant career as a writer, and as a writer she visited various parts of the Continent. Her friendship with Ottilia became very close and their correspondence lasted for the subsequent thirty years. In her *Visits and Sketches* (1834) the "indefatigable" Anna Jameson has given a lively account of Ottilia's influence on old Goethe:—

"She was the trusted friend, the constant companion the devoted nurse of his last years. It accounted for the unrivalled influence which apparently she possessed—I will not say over his mind—but on his mind, in his affections; for in her he found truly *eine Natur*—a piece of nature, which could bear even his microscopic examination. Her mind was like a transparent medium, through which the rays of that luminary passed. For fourteen or fifteen years she could exist in daily, hourly communication with that gigantic spirit, yet retained, from first to last, the most perfect simplicity of character. Sometimes there was a wild, restless fervour in her

¹ Edited by Mr. G. H. Needler, Oxf., 1939.

imagination and feelings. Quick in perception, uniting a soul of restless vivacity with an indolent gracefulness, she appeared to me by far the most poetical and genuine being of my own sex, I ever knew, in highly cultured life."

This passage must be the most notable early Irish appreciation of Goethe. It also indicates Ottilia's Irish affinities as noticed by Goethe.

Ottilia's influence on Goethe gains in significance when we consider the various references to her interest in Ireland shown in her correspondence with Anna Jameson. On August 2nd, 1853, the latter writes to Ottilia: "I told Sir Robert Kane (the great Irish scientist) of your passion for Ireland and all things Irish (excepting Irish men—of which I do not speak) and he promised to send you any publication regarding Ireland, which he thinks might interest you." Two years previous Mrs. Jameson had sent Ottilia a series of books on Ireland, but the exception made by Mrs. Jameson is hardly justified. Ottilia seems to have been attracted by Sir William Wilde, whom she met in Vienna in 1846 and she and he went to "many balls and carnivals, resplendent sceneries of gaiety."¹ That Ottilia's interest in Ireland was sincere and deep, we see from further instances in her correspondence with Anna Jameson. In July, 1843, Anna Jameson writes to her: "Ireland occupies all minds, as well as yours." Then follows a description of Irish debates in Parliament. "Meanwhile," Anna Jameson continued, "the state of Ireland becomes worse and worse. Should there be civil war, the community cannot stand against the English power . . . I feel it all deeply."

The most expressive document of Goethe's appreciation of Ireland is his review of Prince Pückler-Muskau's famous "Letters of a Deceased," which in 1832 appeared in an abbreviated English translation under the title "Tour in England, Ireland and France in the years 1828 and '29 with remarks on manners and customs of the inhabitants and anecdotes of distinguished public characters, by a German Prince." Prince Pückler was Silesian and was married to the daughter of Hardenberg, the omnipotent chancellor of post-Napoleonic Prussia. He was equally known for the

¹ Wilson, *Victorian Doctor*, 1942, p. III.

extravagance of his private life and for his merits as a brilliant writer and one of the greatest garden-architects. The object of his journey through Western Europe was partly to study the parks of France, England and especially of Ireland, partly (it was said) to capture a rich heiress who would marry him after having divorced his first wife. The fact that Princess Hardenberg, the "beloved and adored Lucy," to whom "the letters of a deceased" are written, had consented to that plan was well-known and greatly added to the success of Pückler's book. He started his journey by a visit to Weimar, where he met Goethe. A few weeks after the Letters had appeared, Goethe read the book and apparently he immediately decided to review the work which, in his opinion, was "important for Germany's literature." He sent his review to Varnhagen-Ense, who did not hesitate to publish it in his *Berliner Jahrbuch*. "Here we meet," Goethe says, "a man in his best years, in a high position where one has not to toil before attaining a certain level, but where one has an opportunity of forging one's own fortune. The writer appears a perfect and experienced man of the world, endowed with talents and with a quick apprehension." As for the book itself, Goethe says :—

"Descriptions of natural scenery form the chief part of the letters, but of these materials he avails himself with remarkable skill. England, Wales and especially Ireland, are drawn in a masterly manner. It is only from his pictorial talent that the ruined abbeys and castles, the bare rocks and scarcely pervious moors of Ireland, become remarkable and endurable; poverty and careless gaiety, opulence and absurdity would repel us at every step. The hunting parties and drinking bouts which succeed each other in an unbroken series, are tolerable because the author can tolerate them. He introduces us into distinguished society. He visits the famous O'Connell in his remote and scarcely accessible residence and works out the picture which we had formed to ourselves from previous descriptions of the wonderful man. (Here Goethe doubtlessly refers to personal descriptions). He attends popular meetings (Catholic Association) and hears speeches from O'Connell, the remarkable Shiel (see above), and other strangely

appearing persons. He takes the interest of a man of humanity and sense in the great question which agitates Ireland, but he had too clear an insight into all the complicated considerations it involves to be carried away by cheerful hopes."

George Paston,¹ the only English biographer of the famous Prince deliberately omits reference to Pückler's adventures in Ireland, but the Letters had undoubtedly a great influence in spreading knowledge and appreciation of modern Ireland on the Continent. The Prince explored all parts of the country and all spheres of social life, by no means confining himself to the ascendancy exclusively. He studied Dublin from top to bottom; explored the Wicklow Mountains and the Hill of Howth; he is interested in the pagan and early Christian traditions of the country; he admires the construction of the harbour of Kingstown; he attends the Galway Races; he rambles through Kerry, where he comes across the Whiteboys, and he inserts dozens of valuable remarks on social, religious and natural conditions. In this book, Goethe read a great number of Irish place-names; here he came across the venerable names of St. Patrick and Kevin as well as of Fian McCumhall; here he found allusion to the struggle of the great O'Sullivan and O'Donovan and to many other historical events otherwise unknown on the Continent.

When travelling through Kerry, Prince Pückler was given by a friend "an old English translation of 'the Sorrows of Werther'" (the first English translation appeared in 1780 and reached four editions; in 1789 a new translation from the French was published). Amidst the beauties of Killarney and Kenmare, he writes: "you know how highly, how intensely I honour our prince of poets," but, strange to say, on this occasion he read "Werther" for the first time. Did he realize that this was the scenery which Goethe, when young, had believed to have inspired Ossian, that grand forgery which two decades previously the Gaelic Society, Dublin, had unmasked, but which had been the first inducement for Goethe and many of his contemporaries to study ancient Ireland, her culture and even her language? Whole passages from MacPherson's works rendered in Goethe's masterly translation are embodied in the "Werther." What struck Prince

¹ "Little Memoirs of the 19th Century," 1902.

Pückler was "the strangeness of the accident which led him to read 'Werther' for the first time in a foreign tongue and in the midst of the wild nature of Ireland." When writing these words, he was not aware that the review of his letters would become the latest and most outspoken document of Goethe's relations with Ireland, and that through his reference to "Werther," he led his readers back to the earliest stage of these relations which accordingly comprise a period of over sixty years.

Author's Note.—I have confined myself in this paper to Goethe's relations with natives of, or visitors to, Ireland. His relations with the offspring of the "Wild Geese" in Austria, Russia and Germany, such as Anthony O'Hara (see above), O'Kelly, the confessor of the Grand-duchess, Amalia, and the Countess O'Donnell, would have to form the subject of separate studies, which, as a matter of fact, would be interesting from an entirely different view-point, mainly, the history of the Irish element on the Continent and their influence with regard to the spreading of the knowledge of Ireland and Irish affairs.

Art Notes

By Frederick Carter

ART AND THE ARTIFICIAL

NO doubt, the most striking event of recent days in London has been the acceptance of W. R. Sickert as our most distinguished contemporary artist. The dean of the faculty is the phrase for it, I believe, in academic jargon.

Whilst living and, by any likelihood, capable of more productive activity, we, the public hesitate to set a critical estimate to the work of an artist of distinction. Perhaps because the dealers give no lead. They, of course, like a stable market with no unforeseen changes in matter or merit. For artists can spring engaging surprises of fresh mental adventure at an age when the average man of affairs is a doddering imbecile. Remarkably often the brain of the able painter seems to stay sound even into advanced age. This, plainly enough, holds for W. R. Sickert: once Walter, then for the rest of his days, Richard Sickert. It would appear that not until he reached the last phase of eld did he become

accepted or, even, was he known by the public at large. Then was a photograph of an exemplary Sickert exhibited in a glass case outside the National Gallery over against the landseer lions.

This distinction had taken a long time to arrive. For generations he has been, time and again, under discussion—generally acrimonious. He was taken to be dangerous I found, to my astonishment, in those long past days when I was a gaping student chatting about notable contemporaries. I had remarked on some drawings of Sickert's to an eminent Artmaster.

The ginger-bearded gentleman (for an artmaster in those days could and often would be a gent), jolted out the tails of his frockcoat with a strongly indignant posterior jerk, set the pincenez back more firmly on the broad bridge of his long bulbous nose, blew out the fringe of meagre red hairs adorning his mouth and chin, and explode " But surely you can't admire the work of bubble-bumble-bubble-dreadful-bumble-bubble-bla divorce-bumble-bubble moral tone-bubble life-bubble-babble-blah."

I wasn't just abashed, I was completely confounded. Here was a man who was, as I knew, notable in clubs for an ultra hearty glibness in telling the tales called smoking room stories. Admitted, his work was landscape, innocent of impropriety if a little too full of art. But I marvelled at a judgment which could so balance the proprieties and swing the scale with a prejudice.

Little by little thereafter it became plain that a single-minded artist might readily find himself in the pursuit of a problem which could easily get him " in dutch " with the social rules. His sense of form has not anything to do with that of the man of the world. Still, why should the latter suddenly rise up and scratch and bite and try to fight? Somehow, the artist seems to gall him in his tenderest places, dams his taste and makes ridiculous his cherished convictions. This was the way Sickert looked to the world at large for most of his lifetime.

Robert Emmons in a recent biography (*Life and Opinions of W. R. Sickert*: Faber, 1941), has laid out the career of this notable painter in an admirable scheme of order. Plainly, from the first, he was a painter by the fullest predilection. He cherished and toyed with his material, built it up carefully, cunningly applying every sort of ingenuity, invented or acquired, to the end that all he could devise of colour, rich, restrained, fat and resonant, should grow as by some happy chance upon his canvas.

Conspicuously he was, in his early days, the most pictorial artist of the Music Hall. He was not the only one who delighted in their glitter and shadowy gloom, but he was the artist who saw it that way rather than as a sinister, garish parade. Sickert saw it as the common middling sensual man felt and absolved it from moralising satire. It was a definite part of everyday life and cumulatively he went on to drive his interest more deeply into the problem of exploring the subject matter available in the ordinary day's round. Sickert frequented that kind of theatre to learn, to enhance observation. A box there was the place of all others best adapted to give a plain view of the world shaking loose its inhibitions, for the evening at least.

There the painter was faced with an art which dramatized vulgar ordinary people. Its architecture was made to their taste. . No performer refined anything out of its native humour, sap and vitality. Everything was not too good and not too bad, and all, audience, proscenium and backcloth, hung awaiting

the artist's arrival to transform it, whether it might be Marie Lloyd chirping to her birdcage, or Walter Sickert sketching and scrawling. Leno and Little Tich and Toulouse-Lautrec were others who, one side of the orchestra or the other, flashed a new light on the tawdry scene and transmuted its dross and dregs.

Sickert, of course, had figured in the "Nineties" as a young man. Dieppe was his own particular field of play at the time when Dowson, Wilde, Conder and Beardsley frequented its amenities. His painting of Aubrey Beardsley was included in the *Yellow Book*, showing the subject's stoop, morning coat and trousers with a curious and delicate fidelity to the fantasy which made him choose to designate himself as "Man of Letters."

For fifty years past one or another aspect of Sickert has shown in a more definite shape the changes and odd chances through which art in our time has displayed itself. He has recorded the wise saws and notable quips of those of the great who had wit enough to offer their knowledge in words well enough set and polished for transmission from mouth to mouth without errors or dire improvements.

He believed firmly in the ideal of an academic art which would and could stabilise the shifting ground that squirms beneath the æsthetic feet of most critics and many artists. He wanted adequate instruction to be available, allied to a sound technical standard. He desired above all that the trade of the painter of pictures should be respected and not usurped for a merry-go-round by play-boys, however charmingly they might engage to explain their pranks.

Lack of prestige in an authoritative canon has meant all the curious effects displayed before us during the past quarter century. The dumb devotion of a group to some defined predecessor (and his prophet) aroused Sickert's alarm and indignation. He had his gods, but the unique diety was, to him, unknown and unknowable. He stuck to his pantheon like the pagan which he was, and he was not afraid to question his divine ones and criticize their occasional errors.

Roger Fry's devotion to Cezanne brought them into debate at time and time. But, in sum, Sickert said it was only necessary to put a Renoir or a Manet alongside a Cezanne—or, take his very words, written to the *Southport Visiter*:—"I would urge that you should take your opinions neither from me nor from Mr. Fry, but from the evidence of what Horace calls your 'faithful eyes.'" This is extracted from the last letter of the collection of lectures and correspondence printed in the *Southport Visiter* gathered and issued in an edition of fifty copies by Mr. W. H. Stephenson in 1940. He compiled it, as would appear, about 1930 from material belonging to the period of 1924/5.

Sickert of these Charlotte Street days, came into the orbit of my own experience and acquaintance, for he had a Saturday afternoon open house to fellow-artists. Besides, I knew W. H. Davies familiarly in the after-war times when he lived in Great Russell Street. He was a frequent visitor to the Sickerts' place and proudly displayed an example of Sickert's friendship and munificent generosity on his walls. As I remember it, the picture was a fine example of a Sickert interior resounding with that sort of profundity in tone and colour which he'd always sought to offer to "faithful eyes."

Not that he always achieved that rhythm and resonance in colour and tone. He had an itch to pull the public leg and in his delighted mischief he appeared, now and again, to get his own foot well in the noose. He lost his balance thus, I am persuaded, when he displayed his coloured versions of 19th century book illustrations by various artists, painted in oils.

It is plain that one should regard Sickert as an important figure in our historical record of manners and modes as well as one of our veridic recorders of the thought and talk of his contemporary masters in the arts. But general criticism would seem to have failed to discern how far were most of this group—his Dieppe visiting friends—Wilde, of course, excepted—from the oncoming phase of the *Æsthetic* movement. Perhaps the very busy little bee Rothenstein represents best the link between the various groups. Very naturally, for his job was to know everybody and to lithograph them. Probably one of the best things he did in his so strange career as portraitist, was the lithograph of Shannon and Ricketts seated together at table expertising some bibelot. These two were probably the most notable in the conscious cult of art and the artistic decor in life . . . or as a habit in living. Beardsley, on the other hand, must be adjudged a realist in vision and robustly virile in his design, compared with Ricketts' work for the same author, Wilde. Naturally, of course, one finds the same qualities run throughout their work.

Beardsley dealt with the world around him and saw it with all the delight of a satirical designer of genius to whom pattern-making was a luxurious pleasure and caricature a joy. The illustrations he made for Wilde's "*Salome*" take the play as an excuse to start a series of drawings in which, having represented Oscar as the showman before these singular marionettes out of Holy Writ, he ambles off more and more along his own course guying John Lane along with the perverse princess and her formidable mamma. But Ricketts in "*The House of Pomegranites*" devotes himself heart and soul to enhancement of the morbidity of sentiment. Like his much-admired Gustave Moreau, he saw and worshipped a Salome clinking with necklets and armlets and anklets. And in the structure of the bodies of the figures illustrated the morbid sense shows through. Their limbs are haggard and drawn, their muscles flaccid, they are weary and a little anxious. Beardsley's people were passion-ridden and worn, but it was with too much living and the evil they knew was marked plain, and no niceness of mystery enfolded it.

In the introduction to "*Charles S Ricketts: Self Portrait*" published by Peter Davies, 1939, the editor, Cecil Lewis, quotes as an example of Ricketts' felicity in phrasemaking "*pansies with their beautiful and depraved faces*", an image before which one feels that Wilde himself, master of epigram and felicity in phrase, would stand at gaze. So too, all through the curious accomplishment and high level of technical skill in his work Ricketts was never fully master of his whole understanding. Too much was derived from others, too little from breadth in experience. He was an artist of vast knowledge, culture and business acuity whose taste was held to be unimpeachable. So it was for his own day and no instant longer. It held too much of the stuff that will not keep.

Ricketts prospered, but Sickert found the ways of the world not so smooth. Patrons rarely hung upon his verbal felicities, collections which depended upon his flair and *æsthetic* judgment were small and few, one must believe. But so far as the queer business of putting paint on canvas goes, there seems to be more to be got out of Walter Richard Sickert, who may have fumbled in his grip on profitable exploitation of his gifts, but who never let go his true hold on life for the sake of that odd gymnastic performance called a career.

BOOK REVIEWS

LETTERS OF GEORGE MOORE. With an Introduction by John Eglinton. Bournemouth: Sydenham and Co. 10s. 6d.

Mr. John Eglinton has selected these letters from many hundreds written to him by George Moore during the course of what was almost a life-long friendship. Most of them belong to the period when George Moore was writing *The Brook Kerith*, but a few throw light on earlier and later periods. It is to be hoped that Mr. Eglinton will share with us more of this correspondence, for these letters are still many-sided, excited, wise and witty as when their ink was scarcely dry.

In his interesting preface, Mr. Eglinton writes, it must be confessed, with some acerbity but not with unfairness. He tells us quite candidly that he disliked George Moore when he met him first, was suspicious of his offers of friendship and never quite overcame that first warning instinct. No doubt, he suspected that the modern owner of *Rozinante* wanted to mount him on the donkey. But Mr. Eglinton was wrong, and these letters show Moore's great capacity for friendship and loyalty. The letters are conditioned by the temperamental differences between the two friends. George Moore explorative, brimming with eagerly imaginative interest, always learning, always developing; John Eglinton, an *a priori* critic, who seems to have made up his mind on all matters at an early age, shrewdly critical, but unchanging. Despite his genius, Moore was unusually humble, and in many of these letters he pleads for sympathy and understanding. But Mr. Eglinton was not sympathetic towards Moore's later work. He tells us in his preface that he is of opinion that novels should deal with character and so he did not value Moore's revival of pure story-telling and was left unmoved by those last great works of genius.

You did not like the *Memoirs*, wrote Moore, though they were begun in a magazine that you edited. You did not even like *Hail and Farewell*, or *The Lake*, not at first, and love that is not instinctive is but a figment of the brain. Nor did you like *The Brook Kerith*: you thought the opening winningly written, but as the story advanced you lost the faint liking that the commencement awakened in you. You liked the opening of *A Story Teller's Holiday*, but "The Nuns of Crith Gall" threw you back upon yourself, and the rest of the book was dust and ashes. I believe that you did like *Avowals*, but your dislike of *Héloïse and Abélard* was so active that you wrote an astonishingly incorrect account of it in "The Dial." Do not mistake this statement of fact for a reproach.

But Moore's friendship was stronger than his desire for sympathy and he accepted the melancholy facts.

Many of the letters show how completely Moore demanded in the art of writing the freedom which is accorded by convention to the other arts. Writing from Ely Place in 1909 about the caricatures in *Hail and Farewell*, he says:—

Max Beerbohm has caricatured everybody, and ferociously—his representation of me hardly resembles a human being, but I have never complained and I have never heard of anybody complaining. Is this timidity, this care for personal appearance, confined to Dublin, or are you exceptional? I shall add five or six lines about my own personal appearance, which shall be savage enough. You have fairly puzzled me.

In 1926 he complains of the convention that spends thousands of the ratepayers' money on an indifferent nude by Velasquez, when it denies the right of literature to portray anatomy.

It is interesting to note how often Moore, in these letters, though he learnt his own art in France, insists on a simple English vocabulary. "I have read your article with pleasure," he writes, "despite the displeasure that the use of such words as 'débacle' and 'naively' caused me. Why not 'downfall' and 'innocently'?" But in every letter, every scrap, will be found some illuminating remark on literature and the art of writing. Moore's definitions of his own methods are always happy and exact. Discussing, for instance, *Notre Dame* and its marvellous local colour, he observes:—

. . . as well might I have entered into competition with the Milky Way as with Hugo. This originality I can claim—that Héloïse and Abélard is the one and only historical novel written with no more local colour than is to be found in the Idylls of Theocritus. A. C.

JAMES JOYCE. *A Critical Introduction*. By Harry Levin. The Makers of Modern Literature Series. New Directions Books. Norfolk. Connecticut. \$1.50.

Seven cities claimed the author of the *Odyssey*. The author of *Ulysses* lived in as many, each more polyglot and cosmopolitan than the last. The whole of his creative career and the greater part of his life were spent on the continent of Europe. His work is conceived less in the spirit of Irish renaissance than of European decadence. Though painfully *déraciné*, his roots had gone so deep that he continued to draw upon reserves of vitality from the soil of Ireland; from the very streets of the "seventh city of Christendom".

Joyce is slowly but surely coming to be recognised as a very great master of English prose. The more we understand him the less peculiar he seems. He carried artistic consciousness perhaps as far as it can be carried, and made his life and work into a perfect—but rather complex and almost inhuman—pattern. It is the aim of Mr. Levin's book to discover and explain that pattern, and to show how it reflected the spirit of Joyce's age. He states in the Preface that the book has been written to help to overcome the obstacles that sometimes discourage the reader of Joyce. The result is an interesting and revealing study of this most exasperating genius.

Joyce's books are—as Mann said of *Der Zauberberg*—neither short nor long, but hermetic. In his attempt to analyse and explain so complex a piece of symbolism as *Finnegan's Wake* Levin borrows the terminology of the middle ages. Using the four different levels which Dante Alighieri explained to Can Grande della Scala for the interpretation of his own work, he says "Anagogically, it (*Finnegan's Wake*) envisages nothing less than the development of civilization, according to Vico's conceptions. Allegorically, it celebrates the topography and atmosphere of the city of Dublin and its environs. Literally, it records the misadventures—or rather nightmares—of H. C. Earwicker, as he and his wife and three children lie in their beds above his pub, and broken slumber reiterates the events of the day before. Morally, it fuses all these symbols into

a central theme, which is incidentally Milton's—the problem of evil, of original sin. Finnegan, Earwicker, Adam, Lucifer, and Humpty Dumpty are involved in the same fall, and that fall is accompanied by a detonation of Vico's thunder."

The style of Joyce's later work is characterised by borrowing terms from German metaphysics and French rhetoric; it is conceived as *Strom des Bewusstseins*, or again, as *monologue intérieur*. This is for Joyce a way of dramatizing ideas. He did not bring literature any closer to life than perspective novelists had already done; but he did evolve his private mode of rhetorical discourse. He sought to illuminate the mystery of consciousness, and he ended by developing a complicated system of literary *leit-motif*.

It is interesting to see how his subject broadens as his style darkens: the hero of the *Portrait of the Artist* is the author, the hero of *Ulysses* the common man, of *Finnegan's Wake* mankind. Thinking of Swift, said Thackeray, is like thinking of an empire falling. To think about Joyce is to allow our thoughts to dwell upon a buried city. The past which he tries to recapture, in the throes of his "traumatized" nightmare, is not personal reminiscence but collective experience. The nightmare from which he is trying to awake is history. Freud has indicated and Kafka has exemplified the connection between myth and dreams. The course of history, in Joyce's dream-like rendering, is orchestrated to the street cries and nocturnal noises of Dublin. Street cries and Homeric legend are scrupulously differentiated throughout *Ulysses*. The locus for *Finnegan's Wake* is that point of infinity where such parallels meet.

In his synthetic language he had to distort, if not disown, the tongue of Shakespeare and Swift; he had to preserve the hieratic intonations of the liturgy, excite the enthusiasms of a literary movement and reverberate with the polyglot humours of the professional linguist. However unintelligible he may seem at times he is never incoherent. His idiom is based on a firm command of the usages of popular speech. Consciously, by extending his range of reference, he limits our appreciation of his work. For example, "Pratschkats at their platschpails," for old women at the Liffey, is partly wasted on us, if we do not know that "*prachka*" and "*plach*" are Russian for "laundress" and "crying."

Mr. Levin maintains that Joyce is neither an obscurantist nor a logodotalist, neither a destroyer nor a creator of language. He argues that he could scarcely achieve his microscopic precision and polysemantic subtlety unless he were a neutral. He adds that his restless play of allusion depends, to the vast extent of his knowledge, on the acceptance of a linguistic *status quo*. Perhaps this is what T. S. Eliot had in mind when he referred to Joyce as the most orthodox writer of our time.

To understand Joyce's preoccupation with language and myth it must be remembered that he derives much from Vico's cyclic theory of history. According to Vico and Joyce the first of civilizations four phases begins and the last collapses, in fear of thunder and a rush for underground shelter; and in that sheltering cave religion and family life begin again. In one great warning work of literature after another a retreat is made to this mental cavern, this "Dedalean Labyrinth." Levin takes a quotation from St. John's Gospel: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone, but if it die, it beareth much fruit"—and shows that this is the "burden of the manifold texts of *Finnegan's Wake*," as it is also, explicitly or implicitly,

the text which is expounded with ever increasing urgency by Dostoevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Tolstoy in *Resurrection*, Ibsen in *When We Dead Awaken*, Zola in *Le Débâcle*, Gide in *Si le grain ne meurt*, Eliot in *The Waste Land*, and Mann in his *Joseph* tetralogy.

It is to help the reader of Joyce to a better understanding and a greater appreciation of this "most self-centered of universal minds" that Mr. Levin has written this biography which is to be commended, not only as a delightfully written and informative book, but also for its careful assembling of materials and associations used by Joyce which are neither generally known nor readily available to any but a very restricted group of readers. Its prevailing moderation and good sense, as well as an extensive bibliography, add greatly to its value.

RONALD ANDERSON.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS: PRIEST AND POET. By John Pick. Oxford University Press. 8s. 6d.

In this controversial study of the life of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Dr. Pick had an advantage over his opponents. He has, it seems, access to special knowledge. He tells us definitely that, at a moment of crisis in the life of Hopkins, the Deity directed the poet's ecclesiastical superiors, endowing them for the nonce with literary discrimination. He is even more specific when he sums up the career of the poet.

Christ was not to leave his sacrifice entirely unrewarded even in this world. In the stagnation of the poet's greatest aridity—during the year 1885—He sent the sonnets, probably Hopkins' greatest poetry, which came, as the poet says, "unbidden and against my will." And after his sacrifice and death He has given to Hopkins the acclaim which He withheld during his life.

If Dr. Pick has been really inspired, there can be no further argument. If his remarks are merely metaphorical, they seem in very bad taste and most unfortunate. The lyrical quality of Hopkins' best work is exquisite. But the claims made for it by the younger modernist critics, in their reaction from tradition, have been excessive. His work has become fashionable at the moment, but must submit to the calmer judgment of the future. Acclamation is not literary criticism.

Dr. Pick fails to grasp the real problem of Hopkins because he is unwilling to face the peculiar imaginative position, historical, personal and social, of the English Catholic poets. All these poets, with few exceptions, ranging from Crashaw and Southwell to Hopkins, Patmore and Chesterton, have been converts, and their work implies the conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism. As converts to the previous religion of England, they cut themselves off from the racial imagination, which is explorative and independent. Hence their poetry, across the centuries, shows the same characteristics of fantastic concentration, delight in verbal eccentricities, metaphysical conceits and paradoxes. This subjectivity is increased by the fact that they are deprived of a traditional religious environment and are forced to reject the imaginative and formative ex-

periences of their own childhood. A poet who is forced to re-interpret his own childhood in terms of the *odium theologicum* places himself in a disastrous position. The strain in the case of Hopkins is shown very clearly in that lovely poem, *The Wreck of the Deutschland*. Years of discipline and restraint were not sufficient to prevent the poet from pausing in the poem to attack savagely the Christian creed of his own parents.

But Gertrude, lily, and Luther, are two of a town,
Christ's lily and breast of the waste wood :
From life's dawn it is drawn down,
Abel is Cain's brother and breasts they have sucked the same.

Seen from the historical point of view, the accidents of Hopkins' career as a Jesuit take a minor place as irritants or stimulants. Dr. Pick begs the question by seeing the career of Hopkins *sub specie eternitatis*. More humble-minded critics will be content to take the written evidence of Hopkins from his own letters. For intellectual companionship he was forced to maintain a life-long correspondence with Robert Bridges, Canon Dixon, and other Protestant friends of his youth. The letters themselves show what can only be regarded as a plain deterioration. We see the romantic, impulsive, young disciple of Newman gradually developing into a morbid complaining "introvert." He complains of the drudgery of parish work in English slums, of the boredom of lecturing and examination work in Dublin: we are never given an unselfish glimpse of his parishioners or his students. Living in a Catholic country, Hopkins developed an aggressive English imperialism. With characteristic discretion, Newman appears to have destroyed one of Hopkins' anti-Irish letters. But we can guess its tone from Newman's reply.

Your letter is an appalling one—but not on that account untrustworthy. There is one consideration, however, which you omit. The Irish patriots hold that they never have yielded themselves to the sway of England and therefore have never been under her laws, and have never been rebels. . . . If I were an Irishman I should be (in heart) a rebel.

The diplomatic brackets are Newman's and indicate one of the secrets of his successful career. It is impossible not to compare the fate of master and disciple. The one became a great dignitary, surrounded by admiring and wealthy friends, the author of copious books and controversial essays. The other, of rarer and more sensitive genius, brooded with increasing morbidity in a country which he disliked, shrank from publication and tried to treat poetry as a mere hobby.

M. D.

A PREFACE TO PARADISE LOST. By C. S. Lewis. Oxford University Press, by Humphrey Milford. 7s. 6d. net.

Mr. Lewis's book is interesting but not important. The author believes that to the enjoyment of Milton's poetry there exist certain obstacles which must be cleared away by preliminary discussion. One must decide whether criticism

is possible at all; what is primary and secondary epic; if there is such a thing as the "unchanging human heart"; the exact theological beliefs underlying *Paradise Lost*.

A critic, it seems to me, has only written successfully of a great poet when he has made one want to read the poet, as Coleridge makes one want to read Wordsworth; or Arnold to read Homer, or, in our own time, Dover Wilson Shakespeare. But to do that he must be convinced of the importance of poetry and of criticism. He must not regard, as the author here says he does, all literary questions as comparatively trivial. He also needs a fine literary discrimination, which the author has not. Mr. Lewis talks of the conventional Homeric epithet suggesting the background of an indifferent nature, and quotes in support the famous lines of Ruskin—"The poet has to speak of the earth in sadness"—which ascribes to such an epithet the very opposite suggestion and which Arnold long ago pointed out as an example of the romantically false in criticism. Mr. Lewis remarks naively that *Macbeth* is made more intelligible, if we regard *Macbeth* as dominated by Lady Macbeth; there is hardly a schoolboy who will agree that Shakespeare's great and tragic figure is made more intelligible by having the commonplace label of henpecked husband tagged on to him. Mr. Lewis also tells us that Shakespeare is very concerned with the idea of hierarchy, but he does not go on to tell us that what Shakespeare shows in his great tragedies is a world based on "hierarchy" and the laws assumed as "natural" cracking up, breaking asunder. Lear's world tumbles about his ears because he forgets that beneath the relationship of hierarchy, of child to father, subject to king, is the basic one of man to man, human being to human being; Kent tries to remind him—"what would'st thou do, old man"; and Lear's purgation consists in his being brought to a realisation of this. He learns to perceive what "unaccommodated man" is, what "poor naked wretches" feel. To do so he had to be stripped of the artificial distinctions which hierarchy had heaped on him. To me this seems not unlike the lesson of the Gospels and very unlike what Mr. Lewis feels about the importance of hierarchy.

The tone of Mr. Lewis's writing is condescending. He is pedagogic, as if he wrote for not very bright children, or not very enthusiastic undergraduates. I find this wearying, as I do unnecessary italics and capitals. Disparaging remarks about the associations poetry has for modern readers are surely also in bad taste. We who read poetry now, as people of any time, I suppose, read it because it seems to us that a great poet has a vision of life to communicate; that poetry alone describes the world as we have experienced it, or emotion as we have known it. If a writer does not make us feel that, then though what he writes may be fine stuff in its own way, we must not call it literary criticism.

LORNA REYNOLDS.

CHARIOT OF WRATH. The message of John Milton to Democracy at War. By G. Wilson Knight. Faber and Faber. 10s. 6d. net.

MILTON'S PROJECTED EPIC ON THE RISE AND FUTURE GREATNESS OF THE BRITANNIC NATION. By H. Mutschmann, M.A., Ph.D. J. G. Kruger, Ltd. 6s. 8d. net.

Milton has here indeed met with evil handling. Professor Knight's book is in the nature of a tract for the times and Professor Mutschmann's pamphlet an

essay in detraction. Professor Knight's argument is briefly this:—the British are a chosen race, destined to find salvation for the rest of the world; in pursuit of this they must use force—"goodness not backed by authentic energy is of all things the most pitiful"; power, authority is most fittingly and splendidly embodied in monarchy, and above all in the particular form of constitutional monarchy which has evolved in England. You may destroy a royal person, says Professor Knight, but you cannot destroy "the essence of royalty."

The first idea is very familiar; it is by no means confined to the British people—here in Ireland we also believe we are a chosen race; the Brazilians, I learn, think of themselves as the chosen people of South America—and it seems to me an idea to be abandoned as quickly as possible. Instead what needs to be realised is the unity of the human race, each people who contributes to that whole possessing special gifts but none with the right of imposing even a gift on others. The next point, that the use of power in the service of righteousness is itself right, was of course the view of the medieval church. Among other things it resulted in the crusades, and they helped to start that ferment of mind which led to the renaissance of art and learning and the reform of religion, which in turn led to the disruption of such unity as Christendom had possessed; and England, according to some historians, far from being the champion of righteousness, played the part of major villain in that affair. There is no such justification needed for the war which Britain now wages. She uses force now in the service of righteousness, in self-defence, because earlier she failed to use force in the service of righteousness in the defence of others, in Abyssinia, in China, in Spain. As for Professor Knight's third point, his revival of the Divine Right of Kings, his contention that monarchical government has some peculiar sanctification, that there is such a thing as the "essence of royalty," surely that is an idea which has grown from the practice of monarchy as supported by the twin buttresses of Roman Law and the medieval Christian Church. Monarchy is surely no more than an experiment in government which men have tried and may set aside for another.

To these politics Milton is used as a kind of running commentary, famous passages from pamphlets and poems being adduced to show that Professor Knight's beliefs were also Milton's. One can only feel that neither politics nor Milton is well served. The style of the writing is vague and woolly, with accretions of abstract nouns, a steady indulgence in cliché and jargon, and sometimes a use of connectives the significance of which is difficult to see. One finds oneself asking "why 'therefore'? why 'yet'? 'a direct antithesis' to what?" One is completely beaten by such a sentence as "the office of poet closely concerns the actions of nations." Should it be "the office of poet affects the actions of nations;" and if so, why "office"? Is it not the poet who affects? Or should it be "the office of poet is closely concerned with the actions of nations"; and again if so, why "office"? And even shorn of superfluities, does it mean much? There are paragraphs as loosely constructed; and that so fine a literary critic as Professor Knight could have written them is only to be regarded as one more sad result of the war.

The object of Professor Mutschmann's pamphlet is apparently to dispel the legend that Milton was a poet, a puritan, and a patriot. To prove that Milton was no true puritan—incidentally, a commonplace of criticism for many years—

he quotes the lines so lovely, so instinct with grace and Renaissance beauty of form that none but a supreme poet could have written them :—

Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpin, gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy Dis
Was gathered—which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world—

and so on as everyone knows.

Milton was no patriot, the author continues, because he was incapable of disinterested action ; everything he did was prompted by his extraordinary craving for fame. His journey to Italy had been a last desperate attempt to force the genius within him to manifest itself ; and if on his return he devoted himself to the writing of prose pamphlets on public matters, he did so unwillingly. It is difficult to understand how this could be said of Milton, who at the time of the Italian journey not only aspired to fame but had achieved it. He had already written poetry flawless in form, individual as only the greatest is, as beautiful as anything in English Literature ; and the judicious in England and in Italy knew it. Then at the demands of public service, as it seemed to him, he put aside his poetry and turned to controversy and argument, pouring out his tumultuous pamphlets on every important matter of the time. Professor Mutschmann thinks to disparage further Milton's work, because he finds some words and phrases of these pamphlets repeated in an anonymous tract of the day. He has persuaded himself that this precedes Milton's work, and rejoices at such evidence of plagiarism. I don't think anyone else will be persuaded ; nor either way do I think it matters. To explain greatness, not to discover flaws in the great : that seems to me the proper and sufficiently difficult task of literary criticism. As Hazlitt puts it, one should endeavour to love the best and to give a reason for the faith that is in one.

LORNA REYNOLDS.

STROLLING PLAYERS AND DRAMA IN THE PROVINCES, 1660—1765. By Sybil Rosenfeld, M.A. Cambridge University Press. 15s.

English imaginative drama has never really recovered from the disastrous destruction of the Jacobean stage, and the effects of that religious persecution remain even to this day. In Victorian memoirs one constantly finds that men of letters abandoned all hope of expressing their ideas in plays and turned to the novel. Mr. Bernard Shaw is almost the only dramatist who succeeded in penetrating the politico-religious defences of the stage censorship.

In an enthusiastic, yet scholarly work of research, Miss Sybil Rosenfeld has rescued from neglect and contempt those wandering players who kept English drama from extinction during the dark days of religious persecution. If martyrs were recognised in art, halos might well be placed on the heads of these happy-go-lucky enthusiasts, who risked imprisonment and endured poverty. These legal rogues and vagabonds, who played *Tamerlaine*, *The Spanish Friar* and *Romeo and Juliet* in barns or stables, were relentlessly pursued by the Common Informer. Noblemen, local magnates, and the plain people contrived, by stratagem and wile, to protect the players and enjoy the great imaginative works of Marlowe, Shakespeare and other poets.

Most readers are acquainted only with Goldsmith's essay on the Strolling Players. Miss Rosenfeld has brought together lively and copious details drawn from diaries, playbills, memoirs and Epilogues.

From Hereford the Jovial Crew departed,
Kings walked on Foot, and Princesses were Carted :

Thus, on the Road, no more but common Men,
Once got to Ludlow, then all Kings again.

These Barnstormers of the past had few properties.

No Rosin to flash Light'ning—'twould exhaust us,
To buy a Devil, or a Doctor Faustus.
No Windmills, Dragons, Millers, Conjurers,
To exercise your Eyes, and spare your Ears.

They depended mostly on the imagination of the audience and on their hearing. We find descriptions of the shifts and devices to which these companies were reduced. Parker describes a village performance at which the ale house served as the ladies' dressingroom, the blacksmith's shop as the men's. The doors of ale house and forge were entrances to the theatre. The curtain consisted of bed curtains, strung on a pack-thread, and the backcloth was made out of furniture paper. When the local authorities were friendly, the troupe arrayed itself in its tattered finery and marched through the streets with the excitement of a country circus. Mrs. Charke, whose vivacious memoirs are quoted frequently in this book, tells how it was nothing unusual for her to tramp fifteen miles and play the same evening. Sometimes the local magistrate had to be induced, in order that English poetic drama might be presented in his district. In the accounts of a small strolling company preserved in the British Museum, "taking the town" is put down among the expenses at one shilling.

Owing to vested interests, the troubles of the strolling players were increased when the city theatres were re-opened. The Licencing Act of 1737 presumed all itinerant players to be rogues and vagabonds and would have confined the licence to play to London. But the strolling players had won the affection of the populace, and it was very difficult to enforce the act. In later chapters Miss Rosenfeld deals with the regular theatres in Restoration times and in the first half of the eighteenth century.

A. C.

THE CLASSICS AND THE MAN OF LETTERS. By T. S. Eliot. Oxford University Press. 8d.

This is the Presidential Address delivered to the Classical Association last April. Those who expect novel theories or disconcerting views will be disappointed. Mr. Eliot has determined to be obstinately academic, and he has reproduced a facsimile of the conventional paper. In his attention to conventional detail he has even reproduced the humorous circumlocutions of the lecture room. We may be sure that his audience smiled when, referring to a quotation, he said :—

I read this in one of the periodicals which are found in the waiting-

rooms of certain experts in applied science ; and having neglected to make a note of the passage before being summoned to my professional appointment, I cannot quote chapter and verse.

Who can be found to quarrel with Mr. Eliot's modest thesis—that the maintenance of classical education is essential to the maintenance of the continuity of English literature ? He points out that a genuine appreciation of English poetry is scarcely possible without some knowledge, at least of Latin, if not of Greek. The same may be said of English prose. We cannot really enter into the style of Clarendon unless we have at least a smattering of Tacitus, and to enjoy the balanced eloquence of Gibbon to the full we must have some knowledge, however small, of his classical background. These are the well-meaning platitudes which one might expect in a lecture to first-year undergraduates, and it is difficult to imagine that such sentiments could have awakened any lively interest last April among the learned members of the Classical Association. Admirers of Mr. Eliot will be chiefly interested in his critical "asides."

In the last twenty years I have observed what seems to me a deterioration in the middle literary stratum, and notably in the standards and the scholarship which are wanted for literary criticism.

Contributors to Mr. Eliot's own quarterly, *The Criterion*, will scarcely welcome this drastic statement. This small eight-penny pamphlet is enlivened by one touch of unconscious humour. The review copy is stamped and perforated with the following caution : "Free copy, not for sale." M. D.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE AND OTHER PLAYS. By William Saroyan. Faber and Faber. 8s. 6d.

After a short, but sharp struggle, Mr. William Saroyan has become one of the best known American playwrights of to-day, and his work has excited considerable controversy among the New York critics. The attention which he has attracted has been helped undoubtedly by his lengthy prefaces and commentaries. He has, of course, borrowed this method from Bernard Shaw, but the wit and humour of Shaw are replaced by a solemnity which many may find a trifle ridiculous. Here is an example :—

I believe "My heart's in the Highlands" is a classic. It is surely impertinent for me to believe that the greater and truer American theatre shall begin its life after the appearance and influence of this play, but God forgive me, that is what I believe.

Remarks on the importance of his plays are interspersed with moral platitudes :—

Seek goodness everywhere, and when it is found, bring it out of its hiding-place and let it be free and unashamed. Place in matter and in flesh the least of the values, for these are the things that hold death and must pass away. Discover in all things that which shines and is beyond corruption. Encourage virtue in whatever heart it may have been driven into secrecy and sorrow by the shame and terror of the world. . . . Be the inferior of no man, nor of any man be the superior. Remember that every man is a variation of yourself, etc., etc.

The experimental form used by Mr. Saroyan with brilliance and effectiveness is not original. It is partly based on American cinema technique, partly on the experiments of other American dramatists. *Pullman Car Hiawatha* by Thornton Wilder showed how contemporary life could be depicted on the stage in a series of quickly-moving episodes. The real novelty of Mr. Saroyan's plays is that he has combined the technique of modern experimental drama with the emotions of popular drama. It is an editorial rule in all commercial magazines that the ordinary man in a shop or office, and the ordinary woman in the home (she is still a stay-at-home) must have hearts of gold. With the delightful innocence of a foreigner, Mr. Saroyan has discovered for himself the great and abundant sources of Victorian emotion. He has discovered with equal joy all the stock characters of the magazine world. The chief character in his first play, *My Heart's in the Highlands*, is an old broken-down actor and musician who remembers the misty hills of Scotland. Faint with hunger, he comes to the shack of an impoverished poet in California. He plays for the simple settlers who bring gifts of food and money. Mr. Kosak of the grocery store is equally generous and only the landlord remains villainously obdurate.

The Time of your Life takes place in a San Franciscan saloon, and the chief character is Joe, "a young loafer with money and a good heart," in fact, our old friend the *marchand de bonheur*. Nick, the owner of the saloon, though hot-tempered and excitable, has also a heart of gold. He provides meals for the hungry and unfortunate people and gives immediate employment to broken-down actors and musicians. There is also Kitty Duval, the good prostitute, who is always dreaming about her home away back in Ohio. "I always dream about it as if I could go back and Papa would be there and Mamma and Louie and my little brother Stephen and my sister Mary." Tom, the golden-hearted barman, idolizes Kitty from afar. Mr. Saroyan's clever way of reaching our heart strings and throat may be illustrated by the following. Joe is leaning on the counter, having sent the barman out to buy him some toys which he wishes to distribute to children. The musician is playing the piano very softly in the background.

Nick. What were you crying about ?

Joe. My mother.

Nick. What about her ?

Joe. She was dead. I stopped crying when they gave me the toys.

Nick's mother, a little old woman of sixty or so, dressed plainly in black, her face shining, comes in briskly chatting loudly in Italian, gesturing. Nick is delighted to see her.

Nick's Mother (*in Italian*). Everything all right, Nickie ?

Nick (*in Italian*). Sure, Mamma. (*Nick's mother leaves as gaily and as noisily as she came, after half a minute of loud Italian family talk.*)

Joe. Who was that ?

Nick (*to Joe, proudly and a little sadly*). My mother. (*Still looking at the swinging doors.*)

Joe. What'd she say ?

Nick. Nothing. Just wanted to see me.

The last play in this volume is entitled *Love's Old Sweet Song*, and ranks high in Mr. Saroyan's own dramatic canon. It would be invidious to criticise the play, for Mr. Saroyan has anticipated criticism:—

These charges come from men too dull, too vulgar and too inferior
for me to bother with. A. C.

TIME PASSES AND OTHER POEMS. By Walter De La Mare. Faber & Faber.
2s. 6d. net. Sesame Books.

There is only one question to be asked about magic in poetry. Does it carry conviction as being inevitable; if not, then it is merely fanciful, and not the true fruit of imagination. The anonymous authors of such poems as "Thomas the Rhymer" and "The Baily Beareth the Bell Away" had little difficulty in making their readers breathe the authentic air of fairyland, because at the time they wrote there was none of our modern scientific certainty in men's minds as to what was reality and what was not. Castles were haunted, witches were burnt at the stake, and mermaids were seen by sailors.

Walter de la Mare shares this inability to distinguish between the real and the unreal; his poems often have the inspired innocence of the earliest poems, and although it is forty years since he published his first book, his world of half-lights, forsaken gardens where statues come to life by moonlight, of sunken cities beneath the waves, of sad ghosts who whisper at Gothic windows to those they loved on earth, has never grown stale. Part of the enchanted effect of the early ballads mentioned above, lay in their authors' technical gift for turning language into spells or incantations, and De la Mare also knows this secret. An early poem called "The Mad Prince" is an example.

"Who said 'Green dusk for dreams,
Moss for a pillow'?
Who said 'All Time's delight
Hath she for narrow bed;
Life's troubled bubble broken'
That's what I said."

His metrical perfection has grown with the years, sometimes recalling in such poems as "The Miracle" and "Shadow" the melodious felicity of the Elizabethan song-writers.

His preoccupation with the supernatural never makes him an inhuman poet. He is only too aware of the strange mixture of beauty and tragedy in life, and of its pitiful transience. He has always shown a special tenderness in his poems for children who have not yet learnt the real world too well, for the aged because they do not over-estimate its value, and for eccentrics such as "Poor Miss Loo," because they are unable to distinguish the real from the unreal.

This excellent little selection contains some of his best work. From my

old favourites I will quote the second verse of "Alulvan" as being a perfect description of a ghost :

" His eyes in shadow of his hat
Stare on the ruins of his house ;
His cloak, up-fastened with a brooch,
Of faded velvet grey as mouse,
Brushes the roses as he goes
Yet wavers not one rose."

And of the later, and perhaps more profound poems, the following lines from "The Old Summerhouse," seem to give the poet's essential quality :

" I . . . could listen no more—for beauty with sorrow
Is a burden hard to be borne ;
The evening light on the foam, and the swans, there ;
That music, remote, forlorn."

MONA GOODEN

AH WELL. A Romance in perpetuity. By Jack B. Yeats. Routledge. 6s.

This little book, by reason of its size, perhaps, and by its frontispiece, brings back to me a vivid memory of those early works by the same writer (now treasured by all wise collectors) in which we first heard about James Flaunty or The Terror of the Western Seas, and The Scourge of the Gulph, The Bosun and the Bobtailed Comet, and that gallant ship The Plum Duff. And with this memory comes another of those days in the beginning of the present century when the announcement of a picture exhibition by Jack Yeats in the studio at 7 Stephen's Green brought us all flocking there in eager anticipation of a treat. An anticipation which was never disappointed. For there we would find, as always, the figures, half sailor, half pirate but always delightful, which we looked for in his work. There, too, that excitement, that "touch from behind the curtain" which it is the glorious and disturbing faculty of great art to convey, in his portrayal of men or horses or landscape. Those who are already familiar with *Life in the West of Ireland*, *Sligo*, *Sailing*, *Sailing Swiftly*, *Apparitions*, and the plays, will find again all the romance and wisdom and beauty of those earlier volumes, but he will find also a new Jack Yeats—rather he will find a Jack Yeats *more like* (if that be possible !) a Jack Yeats made more actual, more vivid, the man himself talking to us directly, talking the very talk of the wittiest talker in Ireland today.

Mr. T. S. Eliot in his introductory note to the little volume *Introducing James Joyce* (Faber & Faber, 3s. 6d.) writes of Anna Livia Plurabelle : "It was recorded by the author : I have found that the gramophone record of the author's voice reciting it revealed at once a beauty which is disclosed only gradually by the printed page." I too have heard that perfect recording, and I have also had the great privilege of hearing the actual voice of James Joyce as he read for me the MS. of his *Portrait of the Artist* in the Phoenix Park, as we sat together, on a fine Autumn morning, many years ago. And both of these experiences come back to me most vividly as I read the pages of *Ah*

Well. For here is more than the printed page. Here is the man himself with all his varied effects of voice and gesture and intonation pouring out his full measure of wisdom and of wit. I am not so much reading about the little town he describes—but walking with him as he rambles about. Not hearing about, but really looking at that small town which “like all the best towns” was “a seaport town” and the “lake very near it” and “the cold brown bosom of the fresh water, and the blue steel verdigris green corsage of the salt water” and “the fountain which was capable of throwing a spray higher than the houses” and “the girls and boys and young men” who “were pacing about there” and how “they get a fist full of shining drops on their cheeks” and how they would brush the drops off into their hands and then put their hands to their lips, and some of the old ones would do the same” and I can in reality see the Mayor’s beautiful daughter, who “had a neck perpetually arched in a forgiving way, which made the young men wish to cry, and old men to beat up the young men for their presumption,” and I can visit, in the best of companies that “dark and cavernous place where a merchant, as an after-thought, had set up some casks and sold wine” and where “they sat on an empty box, and drank out of horn cups” “The box was only a small one and so they had to sit very close together on it, half turned away from each other. But they drank in reciprocity for as the wine rolled down into their throats their back bones reverberated with esteem for he who made the wine.” And “The actors who were game enough to rehearse in the open air”—(even as we ourselves used to do in the early days of the Irish National Theatre)—“You’d see a couple rehearsing a fight with long swords along the back of the E. due west with a purple light from a grinning sun, and it sinking, playing on the face and front of one of them” and the Fair Green, about which we are told that “once a lost calf cried piteously there all night for its mother and the cow came from a hill and climbed down letting herself slip down the steepest bank until she found and consoled the calf.”

These passages which I have quoted, delightful as they are, serve but as a prelude to the real story of the book which begins on “One morning, either in early spring, or early summer, its all the same” when “I was standing by the river by the rail and a man came towards me in his shirt sleeves and he was leading two stout little horses, the peculiar horses of the town, one had a straw saddle like an ass’s straddle and one had an embroidered quilt with a flowered surcingle, and the man in the shirt sleeves said to me ‘The stout men of the town are going round it to view it properly from the heights. What about yourself, Squire, joining them?’” Jack Yeats was never one to miss an adventure, and so, of course, he joined the other “stout men.” Of that “Days’ Ride, Life’s Romance” with all its bewildering beauty and truth and wit you may partake, reader, if you will pay the really modest fee of 6s. You will never regret the outlay.

THE TAILOR AND ANSTY. By Eric Cross. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd.
8s. 6d. net.

One is grateful to Mr. Cross for not having attempted to make a novel out of the material he has collected from the talk of “the Tailor.” Ever since

Synge listened to the talk of servant girls through a crack in the floor, and turned his notes of that chatter into great literature, we have had too many note-takers trying to pass off their note-books as literature, without any intervening artistic process whatever. Joyce came along with a memory fuller and more accurate than any note-book and gave us *Ulysses*. "Now," said everyone with a sigh of relief, "realism can go no further. We are free of the stenographers at last." Joyce himself evidently thought so, and passed onwards from realism to *Finnegans Wake*. But Irish literature for the past twenty years has remained in the backwater of dialect *reportage*. Joyce at least mingled imagination with his realism, but his successors have largely ignored the fantastic side of *Ulysses*. Only within the last three or four years have two books appeared which contain both Joyce's ingredients—Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* and Flann O'Brien's *At Swim Two Birds*. Both these books have been undeservedly neglected in favour of others more obviously in the "oral tradition." For it is the survival of the oral tradition which is stultifying our written literature. The bards of the past had to have a longer memory than ordinary men; most of the writers of today imitate their predecessors in this respect, if in no other. Mr. Cross's book shows that even a selection from the best talk of one of the best talkers in Cork County cannot fill a book without being *répétitieux* and, occasionally, tiresome. In so doing, let us hope that it has helped to deal a deathblow to the oral tradition.

Mr. Cross, being an Englishman, is much impressed by the Tailor's intellectual powers, and also by his surprisingly wide, if unreliable, knowledge. Like Wordsworth, he is inclined to attribute it all to the simple life, forgetting that intellect can occur anywhere, and that, if the Tailor is the best talker in his neighbourhood, it is because he is the best educated and most travelled of his contemporaries. Tailors and shoemakers who have travelled about the country in their youth as journeymen, and have met more people, and had more time to talk to them, than men in other trades, are always great conversationalists. Tailors, dressmakers and cobblers can talk as they work and so have a great advantage over the other members of a rural community.

I have said very little in this review about Mr. Cross's book, because there is very little to say. If you cannot visit the Tailor and hear him talk in person, or if you do not know some similar talker in your own neighbourhood, you will want to read this book; otherwise not. As a friend said to me, "If I want realistic dialogue I don't look in a book for it, I go into a pub." Two criticisms might be made however. Is Mr. Frank O'Connor's long foreword necessary? Except that it provides variant versions of two of Mr. Cross's stories about the Tailor it has little to tell us which we cannot find for ourselves in the body of the book. Why, too, the unflattering "candid camera" portrait of the Tailor for frontispiece; could we not have had a reproduction of Seamus Murphy's excellent "head" of him instead, especially as the modelling of it fills a whole chapter of the book?

VIVIAN H. S. MERCIER.

THE LATCH-KEY TO MUSIC. By J. D. M. Rorke. Oxford University Press. 2s.

In this little book the Rev. Mr. Rorke describes how he qualified himself for music-thinking. He provided himself with his own private latch-key

with which he opened the door into music. This latch-key is music-thinking rather than music-listening. Mr. Rorke started simply and doesn't seem to have travelled very far or fast. He learned sol-fa and finds a different quality in each note of the scale—Do, the home-base; the determined thrusting of Re; the comparative resting-place of Me; the fateful Fa, and so on. This is applied to a tune such as "Annie Laurie" and explains a lot! Perhaps it does. My idea of music-thinking is to hold a concert of my own of Bach Preludes and Fugues on the top of a bus. Perhaps I'm wrong.

ARTHUR DUFF.

AESCHYLUS IN HIS STYLE. By W. B. Stanford, M.A., Litt.D., F.T.C.D., Dublin University Press, 1942. pp.147. 10s. 6d.

Every student of the Classics will welcome Dr. Stanford's latest contribution to the study and appreciation of Aeschylus, one of the most interesting and difficult of the Greek stylists. The chapters on Aeschylus in *Greek Metaphor* and *Ambiguity in Greek Literature* gave more scope to the author's sense of the theatre, but in the present work we find the same ease in handling the English language, the same felicity in translation, and the same fertility in ideas. The reviewer has already had an opportunity of using the book when lecturing on the *Suppliants*, and can testify to its usefulness. He regretted only that an Index of Passages Quoted had not been included.

In only one point might it be suggested that Dr. Stanford has too readily accepted the traditional view: why did Aeschylus fall so soon into a "position of venerated neglect"? Dr. Stanford ascribes this odd occurrence to the obscurity of his style, but the style of Pindar (to take an obvious example) was equally obscure and he remained much venerated but far from neglected. Perhaps we can assign a deeper reason if we remember the following facts: Aeschylus drew very impious pictures of Zeus in the *Suppliants* and the *P.V.*, and doubtless similar risks were taken in some of the lost plays; he was actually prosecuted for impiety (it is doubtful whether this was because he divulged the secrets of the Eleusinian Mysteries—the evidence for that view is tenuous and contradictory); Plato singles him out for special censure on account of some of his references to Apollo, and of course expels him from his "ideal" Republic along with the other dramatists; Plutarch, *Nicias* 23, tells us that the natural philosophers were frowned upon for giving rational explanations of occurrences which had hitherto been ascribed to divine agency, and although he only mentions Protagoras, Anaxagoras, and Socrates, we know that the dramatists too left themselves open to attack. Euripides and Agathon found it convenient to leave Athens altogether. Perhaps research on these lines would give us good reason to believe that in politically authoritative circles, at any rate in the fifth and fourth centuries, Aeschylus did not fall into a venerated, but was thrust into a calculated, neglect.

Some minor points: the practice of taking over whole passages of earlier writers without acknowledgment might have been illustrated by Euripides' filchings from Neophron. Page, indeed, in his recent edition of the *Medea* argues, as most scholars do, that Neophron lived after Euripides, but his arguments are quite unconvincing; even if they are accepted, then Neophron would have provided Dr. Stanford with an example. The quotation from Tucker,

namely that Aeschylus' colloquialisms "were not of a kind to vulgarize," might have been followed by an exclamation mark or some other sign of pain. Dr. Stanford's remark that Aeschylus was "a creative genius moulding traditional material to a new form, and an unconventional mind struggling with a very conventional language," might have been excellently illustrated by a reference to Lucretius. Wormington should be Warmington on p. 64, and Ares receives rough treatment on p. 10.

All readers of Aeschylus will buy this book.

B. FARRINGTON.

THE IMMIGRANT IN AMERICAN HISTORY. By Marcus Lee Hansen. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.; and Humphrey Milford. English Price, 14s. net.

There are few, if any, among the many nations and peoples that have gone to the making of the "Great Republic of the West," who could fail to be interested in the book of this title which, in nine essays, covers a wide field of historical research, in tracing the part that each played in developing the national life of the United States. And not the least of these, the people of Ireland.

The author, Professor Hansen, who died in 1938, at the age of 45, was professor of history at the University of Illinois, and as the editor of his essays points out, he brought not only assiduous research and a musing mind to his studies of the subject, but the resources of personal and family experience arising from the fact that, as the son of foreign-born parents, he himself, as a youth, had observed the Americanizing process at work under mid-Western conditions. Perhaps one of the most interesting essays is that devoted to "Immigration and American Culture," in which the author speaks of the emigrant thus:—"We catch glimpses of him in the pages of village history: the musician who formed an orchestra of two instruments to play at weddings and other community gatherings; the artist who wandered from settlement to settlement painting altar pieces for the rude box-like churches; the lover of the drama who transformed a settler's barn into a theatre and presented Lessing, Shakespeare, Holbec or Ibsen for the admiration of neighbours."

One's interest is held in reading the book from the beginning to the end.

W. J. B.